AH IN SPANISH CONVERSATION TO MARK
THE RECEIPT OF NEW INFORMATION

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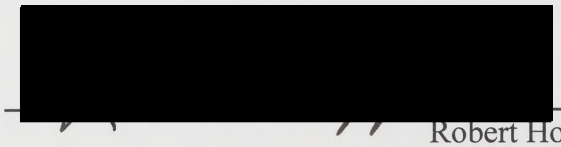

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AH IN SPANISH CONVERSATION TO MARK THE RECEIPT OF NEW INFORMATION

by

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

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The sequential organization of speakership and receivership has been mostly investigated in English. This paper presents some preliminary findings of the work which is accomplished by the particle *ah* in naturally-occurring conversation in Spanish. While in some places this particle compares with other, more established research findings on acknowledgment tokens conducted in English, most notably those of Heritage and the conversational particle *oh* (Heritage 1984, 1998), the Spanish *ah* is roughly comparable not only in terms of how it is distributed sequentially within conversation but also in terms of its function as a change-of-state particle. Ultimately, this study aims at exploring the potential universality of conversation analytic claims across different languages and to test whether observations gleamed from English conversation hold in languages other than English. The primary focus of the present work, then, is to establish a comparison between the English particle *oh* and the Spanish *ah* not only in terms of distribution in talk but also in terms of its interactional function within specific naturally-occurring environments which it occurs.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The sequential organization of speakership and recipientship has been mostly investigated in English. This paper presents some preliminary findings of the work which is accomplished by the particle *ah* in naturally-occurring Spanish conversation. While this particle compares with other, more established research findings on acknowledgment tokens conducted in English, most notably those of Heritage and the conversational particle *oh* (Heritage 1984, 1998), the Spanish *ah* is roughly comparable not only in terms of how it is distributed sequentially within conversation but also in terms of its function as a change-of-state particle. More important than a close correspondence between the English *oh* and the Spanish *ah* is that the concept originally used in making sense of the English proves relevant to another data set outside the framework within which it was originally discovered.

The implications for this study in terms of comparative social interaction of talk are manifold. By using a particle such as *ah/oh* in which to compare the manner in which different languages and speech communities conceptualize social organization of talk suggests that varied speech communities may deal with similar sorts of social situations. Similar conceptions of the social organization of talk, in this case, the concept of a change-of-state in conversation, could result in similar language resources across different languages. This study, like other extended comparative studies of interaction practices across speech communities (Hopper and Chen 1996; Moerman 1988; Beach and Lindstrom 1992) is a preliminary investigation and inquiry into candidate universals or speakership practices which can be observed in many diverse speech communities (Hopper and Chen 1996).

More generally, this study questions whether a similar interactional

achievement, such as a change-of-state token, is applicable in Spanish conversation as it has been observed in English (e.g., Heritage 1984 and 1998). Suggesting that two distinctive speech communities use similar interactional mechanisms implies that in some aspects the two speech communities interpret the social world in a similar fashion. This study explores similarities and differences of the English particle *oh* and the Spanish *ah* in terms of 1) its distribution in talk and 2) its interactional functions within specific naturally-occurring environments. It is posited that many of the resources used in English are either replicated or exist in a varied form and set to slightly differentiated interactional uses in Spanish. Furthermore, this study further analyzes the concept of "change-of-state" and questions its usefulness in identifying phenomenon in a language other than English.

In order to provide an introduction as to previous studies performed under the analysis of the proposed "change-of-state" token, Chapter Two will present a detailed review of English data concerned with analyzing the change-of-state particle *oh* according to a moment-by-moment and turn-by-tun basis. The intent of this review is to provide both a sound methodological basis and empirically-based theoretical orientation to the Spanish language materials. Since this study is implicitly comparative in nature, the English data will provide a detailed examination as to the function and employment of *oh* within English-language environments. These environments will serve the basis for comparison for the Spanish data.

Chapter Three begins the analysis of Spanish data in light of the English-language data. This chapter begins comparing the candidate change-of-state particle, *ah*, in its simplest form–the free-standing particle–with similar examples taken from the English data. Once the comparison of the free-standing particle is

conducted the analysis begins to examine how the organization of *ah* is distinct from the English particle *oh*. This chapter is organized such that the most similar elements of *ah* are always in the beginning of the chapter and each section; as the chapter progresses, not only are the most divergent uses of *ah* examined but examples which do not appear to exist in the English data are considered.

Finally, Chapter Four concludes by examining the contrastive role of particles such as *oh* and *ah* as candidate universals in light of the change-of-state tokens. These two particles are examined in light of one another by looking at a more abstract level the kinds of insight a comparative analysis such as this one can provide using a conversational analytic methodology. Ideas about future research are also elaborated upon in this section.

Chapter Two: *"Oh"*: A Change of State Token in English

In his 1984 article entitled, "A change-of-state token and aspects of its sequential placement," John Heritage offers an analysis of the conversational particle *oh* in English. The particle *oh* is employed in a conventional manner in specific structural slots within conversation serving to reflect what is going on inside the conversationalist's head. In other words, *oh* helps mark a participant's transition from being uninformed or unaware to being informed or aware of a certain matter. The general claim Heritage makes in this article is that the particle marks a "change-of-state" which is to say that the utterer of the particle undergoes an interior change with regard to knowledge, orientation, awareness or information in the talk at hand. Heritage affirms *oh* as a fully fledged response cry or a "sign meant to be taken to index directly the state of the transmitter" (Goffman in Heritage 1984: 300). The two following fragments illustrate the kinds of change in orientation Heritage investigates.

(1) [GJ:FN]

((three people are walking together: someone passes them wearing a photograph teeshirt))

1 (1→) N: oh that teeshirt reminded me [STORY]

(2) [Goodwin: G91: 250]

1 A: yeah I useta- this girlfr- er Jeff's: gi:rlfriend,
2 the one he's gettin' married to, (0.9) s brother.=
3 =he use'to uh,
.....((13 lines of data omitted. During this period of setting is disrupted by the leaving of some of the participants))
17 A: what was I gonna say.=
18 (2→) A: =oh:: anyway.=she use'ta, (0.4) come over....

In example (1) Heritage proposes a "noticing" which is prefaced with *oh* at (1→); the presence of a T-shirt with a photograph reminds the teller of a story which is subsequently related in more detail after this initial *oh*-prefaced statement. The *oh* at (2→), on the other hand, is not a noticing but rather serves to résumé an abandoned storytelling after a disruptive influence interrupts the teller. Once the disruption subsides the teller demonstrates to the listeners that he is performing a mental search about what he was doing before the interruption takes place ('what was I gonna say" in line 17). Once the speaker orients himself once again to the narrative, he prefaces the continuation by an *oh*-prefaced turn: "oh:: anyway.=" at (2→). The presence of *oh* in (2) is a concrete display of a successful mental search performed in response to the interrupted line of narrative (Heritage 1984: 300). The presence of *oh* as a phenomenon of a mental search is a response cry in the strictest consideration of Goffman's use of the term; in fact, public speakers who switch from talking to their audience to talking to themselves are conventionally understood by their audience <u>not</u> as holding a conversation with themselves but rather as actively performing some other, internal action which the audience happens to overhear (Goffman 1981: 92). Taken together, (1) and (2) present the particle *oh* as providing "a fugitive commentary on the speaker's state of mind" (Heritage 1984: 300) ratified by some external circumstance accompanied by an internal cue marking a shift in awareness on the part of the speaker. The basis for change-of-state in (1) and (2) is that the speaker who utters the particle is externally demonstrating some internal change both for his own and his audience's benefit; furthermore the act of producing a change-of-state token, such as *oh*, has structural implications taken from looking at what kinds of talk are produced during and after the utterance of such a particle. The utterer uses a particular lexical item or token both as a product and process of the mental state she or he

is experiencing; not only does this item give the speaker time to reflect, continue, and start some new conversational direction but it allows the audience who is witness to such an act interpret that act as an instance of both a product and process of some interactional communicative state sent forth from the utterer. In other words, the utterer produces the token following a conventional communicative arrangement which can in turn be interpreted or indexed as a communicative resource for the recipient of that token and react according to a set of norms appropriate to such a token. In the words of Harvey Sacks, "members assert a statement in the doing of some activity [that] can be an informative for us of the status of that item in their corpus of knowledge" (1975: 62-63). In other words, utterer of the token, through the utterance of a particular token in context, creates a pattern of using established norms or alternately deviating from established norms of that particle's use and thereby informing the recipient as to the bounds of the particle's interpretation. In the case of *oh,* the audience or talk-recipient will be able to interpret the use of *oh* according to its context as well as project what will be likely to come after such a pause. Compare examples (1) and (2) with (3) taken from the Spanish data corpus.

(3) [UTCL:L16.07]

7		N:	bueno *yes*
8		C:	bueno (.) a:h yo soy l– (.) Christina *hello (.)* a:h *I am (.) Christina*
9			Gonzalez que(.) vine esta mañana con unas: (.) *Gonzales that (.) this morning I came with some: (.)*
10			copias [de- *copies* [*of*
11	(3→)	N:	[ah (.) con los esténciles= [ah *(.) with the stencils=*

The caller, Christina, calls N to conduct some business concerning some stencils which were dropped off earlier that morning. The *ah* which occurs at (3→) occurs immediately after C introduces herself to N; before C completes the explanation of who she is, N recognizes her (line 11) by her name, her voice, her North American accent, or perhaps a combination of all these factors. The interesting thing about this example is that N recognizes C after she identifies herself by name and voice but before she completes the business with which C assumes N would most associate with who she © is. Furthermore, as soon as N hears C's voice and hears her name, N uses an *ah*-prefaced response which she adds a further identification which she associates with C: the customer "con los esténciles" ("with the stencils") (line 11). Similar to the cases in English where *oh* signals some external demonstration of an internal change, here *ah* demonstrates N's realization as to C's identity. In this example, *ah* is the operational equivalent of *oh* or *oh yes* in English where a speaker who does not recognize a piece of information, all of a sudden, recognizes that information. In (3), the information is C's identity as it is associated with the business which C is conducting with N (the stencils). N's change of state, then, is one of non-recognition to precise recognition.

The "change-of-state" advanced by Heritage, illustrated in these three examples, can be summarized as follows: the particle used to propose that its utterer has undergone some kind of change in his or her locally current state of knowledge, information, orientation or awareness (Heritage 1984: 299). While these three fragments illustrate the general principal of the change-of-state these are not the only types of environments in which they can be found. The particle *oh* is found as a response to a wide array of conversational actions in English.

Receipt of Informings as New Information

The first function within which *oh* is used is the informing environment. In an informing a speaker self-selects him or herself to present some matter which may be of interest to a recipient of talk. In this environment, the particle *oh* is used to "mark the *receipt* [*sic*] of the informing delivered in the preceding turn or turns" (Heritage 301). This sequential placement constitutes one of the basic features of the particle in English. Heritage uses examples (4) and (5) as typical uses of *oh* within an informing.

(4) [Rah:B:1:1:12:1]

1		I:	ye:h .h uh:m (0.2) I've jis' rung tih teh- eh tell
2			you (0.3) uh the things 'av arrived from Barker'n
3			Stone'ou[:se,
4	(4→)	J:	[oh::::
5			(.)
6		J:	oh c'n I c'm rou:nd, hh

(5) [Rah:II:1]

1		J:	=hello there I rang y'earlier b'tchu w'r ou:t,
2	(5→)	I:	↑oh: I musta been at Dez's mu:m's=
3	(6→)	J:	=↓aoh::. h=

In each of these two examples, what can be noticed is that the speakers, I in (4) and J in (5), present some information to their respective listeners to which *oh* is the response in each case. In both cases *oh* occurs as a response registering 1) a complete chunk of information and 2) a point at which an informing is perceived to be complete or nearly so by the talk-recipient (Heritage 1984: 301). Free-standing examples of *oh* illustrated (4→) and (6→) are, according to Heritage,

relatively rare but demonstrate another important fact concerning the organization of *oh* in English: the prefacing role *oh* plays to other kinds of turn-additional elements such as *oh* + assessment. This assessment structure shows how the recipient of an informing orients to some bit of information presented by teller. These *oh* + assessment turns come invariably as turn-initial. The following examples illustrate this structure.

(6) [TG:16]

1		A:	...well lately in the morning Rosemary's been
2			picking me up -yihknow so I (haven' been) even
3			takin' a train in [(the morning)
4	(7→)	B:	[hhoh that's grea:t

(7) [JG:3C:5 simplified]

1		R:	I fergot t'tell y'the two best things that
2			happen'tuh me t'day
			....
3		R:	I gotta B plus on my math test
4		C:	on yer final?
5		R:	uh huh?
6	(8→)	C:	oh that's wonderful
7		R:	and I got athletic award
8		C:	REALLY?
9		R:	uh huh.=from sports club
10	(9→)	C:	oh that's terrific Roger

Two important points should be mentioned in regard to these examples. First, the *oh* + assessment structure is a way in which a recipient of talk orients and aligns

to information presented by speaker. More specifically, the *oh*-token serves to acknowledge or receipt some aspect of the previous turn or turns by confirming information which is either new or unknown to the utterer. In cases (6) and (7), the producers of the *oh*-prefaced structure receipt aspects of information presented in the immediately previous turn to which they either have no previous knowledge or they feign knowledge for the sake of eliciting more information on that particular topic. In other words, the *oh* preface is a communicative device which demarcates a particular orientation on the part of its utterer not only towards the informing party but also towards the information within the informing itself. Furthermore, the assessment produced in response to the informing is one which can either be interpreted as encouraging or suppressing the course of the talk. For example, (6) illustrates a curtailing of the informing by the speaker through the use of *oh* + assessment at (7→) and perhaps (9→) whereas (7) shows the same structure to encourage the telling at (8→). In both cases, regardless of the more particular functions that *oh* + assessment plays in each example, both (6) and (7) show a similar organization in that the *oh*-prefaced structure appears to appear after completed chunks of information, whether the informing is actually completed, such as in (6); or whether the recipient believes the informing is complete when it is not, such as in (7). Another distinction which this data illustrates is the effect of the *oh*-preface on the subsequent organization of the talk. Whether the *oh*-prefacing encourages further talk or simply allows talk to continue is unclear by these specific examples. The fact that *oh*-prefacing can sometimes curtail or allows further development of a topic is a significant feature in the Spanish data. Compare (7) to the following examples.

(8) [JG:3C:5]

1 R: I fergot t'tell y'the two best things that
2 happen'tuh me t'day
3 (10→) C: oh super.=what were they

(9) [HG:II:2]

1 N: my f:face hurts=
2 H: =°w't-°
3 (.)
4 (11→) H: oh what'd'e do tih you

(10) [Rah:I:8]

1 V: oh I met Jani:e eh:::m yesterday an' she'd
2 had a fo:rm from the age concern about that
3 jo:b.h=
4 (12→) J: =oh she has?

In each of these cases, *oh* is the mechanism by which the recipients of talk receipt information and invite the teller to continue the informing. Heritage points out that (8) and (10) which receipt in the form of questions which in turn invites a continuation are "newsmarks." In each case thus far presented, *oh* is the product of the talk-recipient who is actively oriented to speaker's informing such that the telling is not simply one which occupies one turn but rather is negotiated among the interlocutors. An important component to this negotiation is that tellers wish to avoid relating information to recipients which is already known (Heritage 1984:303). Schegloff coined a general conversational maxim for this phenomenon: "Don't tell the recipient what you ought to suppose he already

knows" (1979:50). Through the use of this general maxim speakers help to create roles for themselves as tellers and as presumed "knowers" of some information while testing recipients as established uninformed agents. Although speakers have the ability to determine whether recipients are informed or uninformed about a specific aspect of a tellable, "the informed or uninformed status of recipients is commonly the object of active negotiation and determination throughout the course of the informing itself" (Heritage 1984: 304). These roles, then, are the foundation of the negotiation of how the informing unfolds; without the establishment of roles and active negotiation through recipient orientation to information, the informing sequences would result in quite distinct ways. Within this context the change-of-state particle acts as a confirmation by the recipient to the speaker which clearly demonstrates recipient's orientation to the tellability of the information being imparted. More specifically, in the use of *oh* recipients show their before-after difference in recognizing that teller, indeed, has some information to relay and thereby change their orientation to teller by making recognized the fact that the substance of a potential tellable is newsworthy. The particle *oh*, then, is the "means by which recipients align themselves to, and confirm, a prior turn's proposal to have been informative" (Heritage 1984: 304). It can also be noted that information which is not potentially informative from the recipient's point of view is scarcely ever associated with *oh*-receipted information. In a general sense, *oh* plays the role of indicating new information from the recipient's point of view that is in some way informative or potentially so. The uninformed participant's orientation to tellability is acknowledged by issuing a sign of informedness though uttering *oh*. The sequential role of *oh*, then, is one which only responds to information which has, through the course of talk, become self-evident rather than an issue which is still in doubt.

One of the important points to emphasize about the informing sequence is that while the particle "may propose a change of state that is appropriately responsive to a prior turn's informing or repair, its sequential role is essentially backward looking" (Heritage 1984: 324). Particularly in reference to a free-standing *oh*, which is often used to confirm speaker alignments, the particle does not request, invite, or promote any continuation of the informing process (Heritage 1984: 324) in and of itself; English data show that some additional turn or turn element is required to fulfill expected elaborations or extension in a telling. In (11) the *oh* receipts a confirmation check (lines 2-4) based on the initial informing (Derek's ho:me?) in line 1.

(11) [Rah:II:7]

1		J:	Derek's ho:me?
2			(0.5)
3		I:	yo:ur De[rek
4		J:	[ye:s m[m
5		I:	[oh:
6	(13→)		(.)
7	(14→)	I:	an'- is he a'ri:ght?=
8	(15→)	J:	=oh he's fi:ne...

After the *oh* is receipted there is a short pause at (13→) after which I continues by extending his turn through further inquiry into the subject of the informing (14→). Once this latter inquiry is requested, the teller continues with an *oh*-preface indicating perhaps that there was a misunderstanding (15→) and the pause at (13→) was an implicit invitation to follow-up on the initial news announcement in line 1. Example (12) has a similar pause that indicating a withholding of a continuation or elaboration of the initial news announcement until the recipient

specifically moves for such an elaboration.

(12) [HG:II:25 (detail)]

1		N:	=.hhh d'z <u>he</u> 'av 'iz own a<u>p</u>a:rt[mint?]
2		H:	[.hhhh] yea:h=
3		N:	=<u>oh:</u>
4	(16→)		(1.0)
5		N:	<u>h</u>ow didju git 'iz <u>numb</u>er

In this case as well as in (11), the *oh* before the pauses at (16→) is backward looking in that the informing is not completed but performs a receipting of the action in the informing. Furthermore, the utterance of *oh* is opaque in that it neither confirms nor assesses the information but communicates the tellability of the information as something unknown. In both cases, the utterer of *oh* pauses slightly and explicitly requests further information on the topic of the informing in line 5. This issue of opacity of the *oh* particle within interaction is an important one which indicates a particle with a status not directly equivalent to a standard lexical item but rather a particle variable according to the context within which it is employed. This also seems to indicate that the *oh* particle is a response cry uttered by the party whose information gap either has been filled or is in the process of being filled but, from the perspective of the teller, merely shows some a newly emerging orientation on the part of the recipient to the information being conveyed. In certain circumstances, such as (11) and (12), production of the particle as a free-standing token appears to be understood as a receipt from the teller's perspective; what is uncertain is whether the teller interprets recipient's receipt as sufficient information to fill the gap or is merely attempting to ascertain the extent of recipient's informedness respect to the presented information. Other circumstances present opposite data: sometimes recipient's production of an *oh*

receipt can produce speaker as projecting further turn components related to the informing. Consider (13) and (14).

(13) [W:PC:1:(MJ)1:1]

1		J:	When d'z Sus'n g[o back=
2		M:	[.hhhh
3		J:	[( )
4		M:	[u-she: goes back on Satida:y=
5		J:	=o[h:
6	(17→)	M:	[a:n:' Stev'n w'z here (.) all las'week...

(14) [Rah:B:2:JV(14):1]

1		J:	oh::: have they'av yih visitiz g[one then]
2		V:	[they've go]:ne
3			yes
4		J:	oh [:ah
5	(18→)	V:	[a::n' they've gone to....

In both (13) and (14), the *oh* receipt occurs in overlap with a stretched "and" produced by the primary teller where the speaker displays a continued turn occupancy and an intention of continuing the telling based on the receipt given by the recipient's production of *oh*. One possibility for this difference in organization is suggested above: the speaker may infer a particular orientation toward the informing based on the opacity of the *oh* receipt. The organization of teller's informing must be in response to recipient's process of orienting to the informing based on a negotiated, moment-by-moment negotiation of the informing process itself. Whereas in (11) and (12) teller assumes that recipient, through the manner of response, is somehow more informed than they actually

are; similarly, in (13) and (14) teller assumes that recipient is less informed thereby meriting a more elaborated and less cued continuation of the informing itself. In all four cases, the role of the *oh* particle appears to be on of receipt based on perceived informedness.

Summarizing this section, the *oh* token is a particle uttered in response to some sort of informing which registers some change of orientation on the part of the utterer relative to some type of new information related by the teller. Within an informing sequence a larger social organization is demonstrated through the assumption of roles, that of teller and that of recipient of an informing whereby teller is presumed to know something about which recipient is either misinformed, uninformed, or unaware. In this environment, the *oh* particle acts as a receipt to some previous turn in which some piece of new information is related to a lack or perceived lack of information that is relevant to the recipient at a particular point in a conversational encounter. With the utterance of *oh* both teller and recipient reify the already present conversational roles such that recipient receipts teller's informing sequence with *oh* once recipient perceives an informing to be complete or at recognizable units or chunks of information. In many ways, these function of *oh* represent an overview of the greater organization of *oh* in English conversation through the way it structures orientation to information through interaction. Specifically in the environment of the informing, *oh* often acts to curtail or discourage further elaboration of talk on a given topic. As a free-standing particle, *oh* naturally tends toward curtailing further topic elaboration; however, in combination with turn-additional elements, however, *oh* can encourage or simply permit further elaboration without elicitation of more information concerning the informing itself. Finally, from the teller's view, *oh* can also be interpreted as a cue to further project information concerning an

informing in which case the teller often continues the informing process in overlap with *oh* thereby forcefully assuming the conversational floor before the recipient of the informing "gives it up" by completing the full turn. Overall, *oh* acts as a change-of-state particle which demonstrates recipient's before-after transition of informedness respect to information or knowledge that has become clearer through the process of the informing.

Response to Counterinformings

Whereas *oh* often occurs after an informing it is often used to recognize the newness and surprise at a piece of new information presented by teller to recipient. This particle is also often used in counterinformings where a "first statement is met by a second...contrastive with the first" (Heritage 1984: 312). In this environment, *oh* usually occurs with a restatement of a previous position by the utterer of the particle. The change-of-state still holds for this environment in that the utterer of the particle is also the participant who is, in some way, realizes the full implication of the revised counter statement and thereby accesses new information through the revision of the initial statement. In (15) B says *oh* in line 5 as a turn beginning to an admission that his prior assessment of the item being identified ("it looks like beef'n bean curd") (line 1) was incorrect; the second portion of his turn in line 5 ("pork") gives rise to a display that his initial observation of the item was incorrect.

(15) [Goodwin: Family Dinner: 13]

1		B:	it looks like beef'n bean curd
2			(1.0)
3		J:	well I wan' lots of beef
4		D:	I think it's pork
5	(1→)	B:	oh. pork
6		D:	mm hm

B performs a two-move turn at (1→). With the production of *oh*, B shows himself aligning himself against his initial statement in line 1; with the repetition of the word "pork" in the second part of his turn at (5→) B accepts and confirms D's corrective counter-informing offered by D in line 4. The *oh* in this sequence serves both as a receipt of the counterinforming in line 4 but also as an acceptance of the correction offered by the counter-informing. Not only does *oh* act as an implicit bracketing off and disposal of B's initial characterization of the item as "beef" (line 1) but it serves as a corrective device implying an acceptance of the counter-informed. Compare (15) with the following example where the counter-informing is contested over a series of turns.

(16) [Rah:B:1:1DJ(12):2]

1	I:	ye- h. Well she's gone to mm eh: eh: Chester:
2		(0.9)
3	I:	Ja[nie:
4	J:	[↑Janie has
5	I:	↑ey?
6	J:	no she hasn't
7		(0.8)
8	I:	yes she's go::ne

9 (0.7)

10 I: she went just before dinner

11 (0.2)

12 (2→) J: oh↑::: oh I [(thought)']

13 I: [she w'z in such a] rush

I's initial announcement is followed after a considerable gap of 0.9 seconds (line 2) after which the teller gauges that the recipient needs more information to recognize the implicit subject of the informing and therefore pronounces her name (line 3). The informing is met with a counterassertion ("no she hasn't") in line 6 to which several more turns replete with pauses until, in line 12, J finally accepts I's informing at the *oh* + turn (2→) with a stretched and rise-fall intonation production of *oh*. The particle *oh* is combined with a further turn element which occurs in overlap with a more specific treatment of the circumstances of why Janie had to leave. Similar to (15), example (16) uses the counterinforming mechanism as a vehicle of correction by diagnosing a piece of imperfectly known information; in both cases teller uses the counterinforming as a manner of setting the record straight and providing "correct" information to the recipient. Examples which propose a counterinforming or contrastive proposal use the *oh*-carried change-of-state proposal is used "by one of the parties to propose a revision of his or her position that overtly responds to the other's talk as corrective" (Heritage 1984: 315); this environment appears to make no distinction between talk which is corrective in terms of perception of the item itself, such as example (15) and talk that is corrective in terms of access to some piece of information to which the teller may be privileged and therefore informing the recipient, such as example (16).

The counterinforming environment is strikingly similar to the informing

sequences in terms of its organization of *oh*. One of the major differences between the informing and counterinforming environments is the latter's function as a corrective device in conversation. By offering a contrastive proposal to another's talk, the counterinforming allows participants to consider and reflect on their own state of information relative to the item originally offered as well as the new item offered within the sequence. Another difference between the two environments concerns the role of the free-standing *oh*. Although within in the counterinforming environment a free-standing *oh* can adequately acknowledge and accept a counterproposal by a teller, such examples appear to be rare as most responses to counterinformings tend to be accompanied by other turn components, especially repeated or recycled items from previous turn or turns. The environments of informing and counterinforming do, however, share an important similarity. Heritage states that in each sequence *oh* is "*at a minimum* [*sic*], one of accomplishing a retrospective reconfirmation of both the prior and the current knowledge states of the participants" (1984: 315). This orientation reaches both into the roles of both speaker and recipient. From the speaker's perspective, the production of the particle confirms their role as knowledgeable about some matter; from the recipient's perspective, the particle asserts that "whereas they were previously ignorant, misinformed, or uninformed, they are now informed" (Heritage 1984:315). Through the use of the *oh* particle, speakers orient themselves to one another sequentially such that not only are their roles appropriate toward one another interactionally but also in terms of their participation in the dissemination and reception of information.

Next Turn Repair Initiators

The particle *oh* also occurs outside of informing-type environments. An example of another type of environment where *oh* regularly occurs is within next turn repair initiator (NTRI) sequences where "a second speaker initiates repair on a prior speaker's turn and, the repair having been performed by the first speaker, the second speaker receipts the repair with *oh*" (Heritage 1984: 316). NTRI sequences are repair sequences in which one party in talk presents some difficulty within the talk and moves to correct the difficulty before moving on to other matters. In these cases, *oh* serves as a signal of resolution such that its utterer demonstrates that the diagnosed difficulty is no longer problematic and has been resolved. In this environment, *oh* tends to be either free-standing or occurring with additional turn-components which mitigate or amplify the implied change-of-state.

(17) [C & D:9]

1		A:	well who'r you workin' for
2		B:	.hhh well I'm working through the Amfat
3			Corporation
4	(1→)	A:	the <u>who</u>?
5	(2→)	B:	Amfah Corpora[tion (.) t's a holding company
6	(3→)	A:	[oh
7		B:	yeah

In this example with the initiation of the repair sequence (1→), the repair sequence treats the repairable as an item of trouble which appears to be a problem of recognition, e.g., A does not explicitly know who or what the "Amfah Corporation" is. Once B revisits the name (2→), A immediately produces *oh* before B has the opportunity to flesh out the identity of the corporation; A's

problem, then, with the name of the corporation turns out not to be one of recognition but rather a trouble of hearing the name. The production of *oh* at (3→) which occurs in overlap with the requested repair at (2→) serves as a sign of resolution to the initial problem of understanding the name initially proposed in line 2. Furthermore, A's interlocutor, upon hearing the production of *oh*, gives only a restatement of the name of the company and a brief statement about what the company does; in other words, B gives only a superficial treatment of the name and identification of the company upon which A requests a repair. Once B hears *oh* within the repair sequence, he discontinues almost immediately in his repair sequence. The role of *oh* in this environment indicates that the particle indicates some kind of resolution of the problem previously indicated. This problem is further illustrated by the following example.

(18) [NB:II:1:10]

1		B:	if Percy goes with- Nixon I'd sure like that
2		A:	who?
3	(4→)	B:	Percy
4			(.)
5	(5→)	B:	that young fella thet uh- his daughter was
6			murdered
7			(1.0)
8		B:	[(and)-
9	(6→)	A:	[OH YEA:::h
10		A:	YEAH
11		B:	they said sump'n about his going tuhgether uh-on
12			th' ticket so...

This case is somewhat distinct from the previous one because of the syntactic

ambiguity inherent in B's initial statement in line 1 where two names are mentioned (Percy and Nixon). A's NTRI (who?) in line 2 indicates a either a recognition or a hearing problem of one of the two names. B assumes[1] that the first name in the series is the ambiguous one repeats "Percy" at (4→) thereby diagnosing the repair problem as one of hearing not of identification. After (4→) there is a slight pause indicating B's expected response from A recognizing the name; when none comes, B continues the recognition process this time by ushering a more extended identification utterance at (5→). When A finally does recognize the name and identity of the person at (6→) after a 1 second pause (line 8), the *oh* + turn sequence occurs at a louder pitch than the rest of the dialog. The NTRI sequence does not differentiate between a hearing or recognition/identification problem but rather that some aspect of the immediately preceding sequence is somehow problematic. (Heritage 1984: 317). Both resolutions in (17) and (18), though somewhat different in terms of the problematic item (hearing vs. recognition), are prefaced by an *oh*-receipt. By using *oh* as a receipt for resolving the problem, the repair initiator signals to the teller that the problem–whatever it was–is no longer an impediment to the larger conversation which can now be continued with one or more points clarified. Once again, *oh* is used to receipt a change-of-state or to perform a doing of a change-of-state relative to some piece of information presented via the repair sequence.

In contrast with the informing environment, in the repair sequences *oh* indicates a sequence-terminal move which displays that the repair initiator has resolved the proposed difficulty. The reparable must, similar to the informing

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[1] Why "Percy" is assumed to be the source of trouble is another, rather interesting matter but outside the scope of the current discussion.

sequences, be some element which occurred previous to the repair sequence to which it responds. Within this environment, *oh* serves as a diagnostic tool to locate and potentially resolve some trouble within a given sequence of talk. Unlike informing sequences, however, the other-initiated repair sequences do not give "hints" as to what the source of trouble may be but simply acts as a diagnostic element indicating some difficulty in the talk. The function of *oh* here is to localize the trouble within the few turns previous to its utterance and demonstrate that its utterer has resolved the matter sufficiently enough to continue with the forward-moving element of conversation. In other words, *oh* functions as a visible sign to the speaker that whatever difficulty may have been present in previous turns has now been resolved and talk can résumé.

News Announcements and Itemized News Inquiries

One of the resources speakers have at their disposal in conversation is that of initiating a new topic such as a news announcement. News announcements tend to differ from standard informings in that they are usually abrupt or unsolicited informings in which interlocutors revisit some matter of previous conversation. The effect, then, is one of "catching up" on some matter of mutual interest or concern. Like in other conversational topic nominations, once speaker nominates the topic recipient must confirm or reject topic nomination; however, because the information tends to be of mutual interest, both parties tend not to reject the topic nomination but accept it. Once again, like the informing sequences, one party tends to have more information available on the subject resulting in reified teller and recipient roles; the difference between the news announcement and informing environments is that the topic nominator is not always the one who tends to be teller, which is opposite from the informing

sequences. Within the news announcement, *oh* confirms a preliminary stage of the announcement which elicits further talk from the "knower" of the news. Here, the *oh* receipt tends to occur not only at a preliminary stage of the announcement but is used by announcement recipient as the primary resource to interactionally inform teller about her or his state of knowledge concerning the tellable. In this environment, then, orientation to telling is most strongly implicated through encouragement of teller to continue with more information concerning the topic at hand. Moreover, the news announcement often tends to be a presequence to another informing sequence regarding the participants, circumstances, or objects explicitly highlighted within the news announcements. That is to say that the subject, context, or participants topicalized in the news announcement may or may not feature a prominent role in subsequent informing but some aspect of the news announcement will preface a subsequent informing. Examples (22) and (23) illustrate.

(22) [Rah:B:1DJ(12):2]

1		I:	yes he's he[re
2		J:	[mHm
3			(.)
4	(1a→)	J:	I [saw Janie this mornining=
5		I:	[yes
6	(1b→)	J:	=in in: uh Marks'n Sp[encers]
7	(2→)	I:	[oh you] did did[dju y[es]
8		J:	[mm: [.hh]=
9	(3→)	J:	=she w's buyin' a whole load of stuff....

(23) [Rah:I:8]

1		J:	...'cuz she said she wouldn' be going if Janie
2			w'z going t'that keep fit thing
3	(1→)	V:	u-right yeh .hh oh I met Janie eh:::m yesterday
4			an' she'd had a fo:rm from the Age Concern about
5			that jo:b .h=
6	(2→)	J:	=oh she has?
7	(3→)	V:	so– eh she w'z sending the fo:rm back...

In both (22) and (23) the news announcement topicalizes a subject without giving away too much to the news recipient. This is, to some extent, an awareness on the part of the teller that the recipient may know some or all of what promises to be a tellable and therefore holds back slightly to see whether or not to proceed with the telling. With the mention of the tellable (1→), speaker allows just enough to be said in order to bring a full topic change, intimating that there is more to disclose on the subject. At (2→) the talk recipient orients to speaker's tellable by an *oh*-prefaced newsmark which aligns recipient's interest in the topic and thereby sets the stage for additional turn-components in which to encourage a continuation of the news (3→) from teller. Finally, teller acknowledges recipient's inquiry and continues with the telling. Heritage notes that in these cases, the news announcement which is *oh*-receipted usually follow an *oh* + inquiry or *oh* + newsmark (1984: 328). It is important to note that, within this environment, a free-standing *oh* does not perform the same work as the *oh* + inquiry/newsmark in encouraging further elaboration. Whereas in the informing environment either a free-standing *oh* or an *oh* + turn component both have the potential for eliciting further talk from the speaker, the news announcement environment does not appear to possess this flexibility. Here, the free-standing *oh* is substantially

weaker in encouraging further talk and, without some sort of mitigation or turn-additional component, actually curtails further talk. Consider (11).

(11) [Rah:II:7: extended]

1		J:	oh (well) let's hope something comes o:f I[:t
2		I:	[yes:
3		J:	mm: [.h
4		I:	[ye[s
5	(1→)	J:	Derek's ho:me?
6			(0.5)
7		I:	yo:ur De[rek
8		J:	[ye:s m[m
9	(2a→)	I:	[oh:
10			(.)
11	(2b→)	I:	an'- is he a' ri:ght?=
12	(3→)	J:	=oh he's fi:ne...

Without further turn components, *oh* as a free-standing element (2a→) can be seen clearly as a response to the informing at (1→) but the slight pause at line 10 and a recycled turn by the utterer of *oh* at line 11 shows that the speaker does not take the production of *oh* as a natural cue to continue discussing the matter of the news announcement. The gap after (2a→) indicates that both I and J are expecting some further addition to the discourse until I, at (2b→) initiates a self-repair by further issuing an inquiry as to the status of the subject of the announcement. The free-standing example of *oh*, then, can be demonstrated to not encourage further talk as part of its receipting action. Instead, the *oh* at (2a→) seems to register more of an emotional response such as surprise or shock and thereby would perhaps be better analyzed as more of an emotive response cry which employs the linguistic

unit *oh* as its mechanism.

A closely related environment, that of the itemized news inquiries contrasts only slightly with the news announcement. In fact, this environment seems to be a specialized case of the news announcement whereby the topic shift is usually driven by the intended recipient who nominates a potentially informative topic. Unlike its sister case, however, the placement of *oh* occurs a point after which the initial sequence of the news inquiry has been completed. Whereas in the news announcement the *oh*-prefaced turn helps to elicit more talk from the teller, in the news inquiry environment *oh*-prefacing comes only after the initial informing sequence. Not only does the intended recipient of the news move to inquire about the subject of the announcement but the intended recipient is also responsible for ensuring that she or he does not intervene too soon in the inquiry. Example (24) illustrates.

(24) [WPC:1:(MJ)1:2]

1	(4→)	M:	.hhhh (.) °um::° 'oo is yih mother by: th' way:y.h
2			(.)
3	(5→)	J:	we:ll she's a: bit better:
4	(6→)	M:	mm[::
5		J:	[eh- she came: do:wn on: Satidee:eveni[ng...
6	(7→)	M:	[↑oh: did...

The news inquiry is usually reserved for topics of talk which interlocutors have discussed previously and the initiator wishes to touch on the topic in order to be informed again (4→) and thereby inherently placing the teller in the "knowing" position of the interaction. The intended tellers realize this role-assignment and typically give a minimal answer which is "hearably incomplete" (Heritage 1984: 330) serving to reify the roles of potential teller (5→). Because of the incomplete

nature of the initial response, query-initiator utters a continuer at (6→) to encourage a further development of the topic at hand. It is important to note that *oh* is not a part of this interaction until (7→) where the teller begins to develop the topic and reaches a tentative point of possible completion.

(25) [HER:I:11:3]

1		N:	=.h have are: you ex:pecting [any (puppies)?]
2		I:	[.h well I hope]so::=
3	(4→)	N:	[°oh how e]xci[ting°]
4	(5→)	I:	[uh::m] [uh::]m: d-Tessa w'z mated about three weeks
5			ago:
6	(6→)	N:	hhoh:[( )
7		I:	[and (.) Kizzy w'z mated about two weeks
8			ago[:
9	(7→)	N:	[oh my goodness you do as[:k for i]t
10		I:	[eh-h eh]

In (25), the stages are the same as (24) with the exception that *oh* receipts the initial, minimal response to the inquiry at (4→). The effect interactionally is that I's continuation at (5→) is momentarily disrupted such that the telling does not proceed until N finishes her *oh* + assessment receipt of the initial response. Heritage interprets this overlap competition as an early curtailing of the topic before the inquiry can be properly addressed. Compared with the two other instances of *oh*-receipt produced at (6→) and (7→) which occur at places of potentially completed informing sequences, (4→) appears to be disruptive of the telling. Whereas (6→) and (7→) occur at points which receipt self-contained sequences of information, (4→) acts as if I's initial response is a complete informing. The overlap competition is the primary issue; whereas in (6→) and

(7→) where *oh* acts to receipt chunks of information, at (4→) the receipt is preliminary and appears to curtail any further turn-relevant components.

In contrast to previous environments, the news announcement and itemized news inquiry have a particular organization when considering the *oh* particle. While the fundamental role of performing receipt functions remains in tact, within these two environments *oh* serves to encourage a nominated topic development at specified points from within the nomination process. In news announcements and news inquiries the encouragement occurs at different places. In the former environment the elaboration using *oh* occur at a point after the topic is first nominated and serve to encourage a more complete telling of the announcement; in the latter environment *oh* occurs after the topic has been introduced, confirmed, and accepted as the topic for discussion. In both cases, *oh* generally occurs with either a newsmark or assessment in order to activate the encouragement for further elaboration; free standing particles tend to discourage continuation and, as in informing environments, prematurely curtail the topic. New information in this environment is confirmed by *oh* related to new topics introduction within the conversation itself. In fact, the concept of "new information" is broadened in this environment to include topics which are nominated because, in their very reason for being nominated, have some element of new information to present to an interlocutor. Within this scheme, then, *oh* serves, more than any other environment, as a move to confirm new information.

Conclusion of English Data

Heritage notes that although *oh* and other conventionalized lexical expressions such as *yes*, *uh huh*, *mm hm*, etc., have been generically labeled "back channels" or "signals of continued attention" (1984: 335) these analyses have

greatly underestimated the range of differentiation and complex organization such tokens occupy in the English idiom. As Heritage points out, the semantic meaning of *oh* is relatively simple: the particle is produced to propose that the utterer has or is in the process of undergoing some type of internal change relative to the knowledge or attention to some aspect of an external stimuli (1998: 327). Utterers of a particle such as *oh* use the token not only as a way of signaling an internal change but also as an interactional device whereby speakers can also know through the context of the use of such a particle in what sense the change-of-state implies relative to the talk within conversation. The implicit change-of-state, however, has far-reaching effects on the local environment of talk. By signaling to a participant in talk that one has experienced a "change-of-state" the speaker, according to the specific environment in which the particle is uttered, can infer many different types of information as to both the current and former state of information under which the recipient is operating. For example, an *oh* + newsmark within an informing can demonstrate alignment with the speaker by confirming the status of a potential tellable and thereby encourage further talk along a nominated topic for discussion. Through a larger concern with context and particular elements featured in a given spate of talk the *oh* particle's placement is managed sequentially thereby permitting conversation to continue. While contextual cues are considerable resources for both speakers and talk recipients to draw upon in interpreting a change-of-state proposal, particular elements of the sequential position of the particle also helps interlocutors determine interactional meaning of the proposal itself.

General features of *oh* which have been enumerated in this preliminary section are those functions which highlight aspects of "a change-of-state proposal...most commonly used to accept prior talk as informative" (1984: 335).

In this data set *oh* occurs as a turn-initial phenomenon where it is regularly used to recognize and acknowledge a previous turn or turn-component as potentially informative within the context of a particular conversation. The means of performing this is through receipting information in a previous turn or turns. The action of receipting information serves to localize or single out a particular element of talk as potentially informative and more tellable to the utterer than some other aspect of a telling. The interactional aspect of this seems clear. The *oh* token structures information in terms of talker and recipient roles in which the flow of information is negotiated on a turn-by-turn basis according to the kinds of responses are generated at a particular point within talk. The *oh* token permits both teller and recipient to continuously monitor the a spate of talk through slight interactional adjustments that can noted and reacted to appropriately. Particles such as acknowledgment tokens such as *oh* are, more often that not, the primary verbal cues to which recipients can demonstrate to their interlocutor according to a normative pattern of "ritualized...transformations [which] occur to a form of interaction, a communication arrangement, a standard set of participant alignments" (Goffman 1981: 84). In other words, acknowledgment tokens such as *oh* are used in conventionalized ways which give both recipient who utters the token and speaker who receives it a frame of reference by which each actor can approximate what the other is doing in any given moment during interaction. While this knowledge may not, necessarily, be overt and conscious knowledge, it does permeate conversation through the turn-taking mechanism and other conversational devices which enable co-conversationalists to conduct their business and make sense out of one another's behavior. In this sense, the local environment is only a metaphor for the larger context of the conversation itself and, indeed, social ways of sense making as it exists for groups who identify

themselves with one another in speech communities. The insights gained from reviewing the English data in this chapter will be useful only as a framework for analyzing the Spanish data in the next chapter in the hope that the insights which hold true for English may prove relevant for non-English data.

Chapter Three: *"Ah"*: A Change-of-State Token in Spanish

Like other studies which focus primarily on conversational interaction, the analysis of this study concentrates on the action of the recipient through the use of the change-of-state particle in English and Spanish. In this field of inquiry, "recipient interprets what speaker is doing as evidence for a larger activity pattern so that she [or he] can then collaborate with speaker in producing that activity" (Goodwin and Goodwin 1992: 83). Both participants, then, demonstrate themselves as co-present to one another interactively through the way in which they respond to one another's turns. It is through a careful look at the turn-by-turn and utterance-by-utterance unfolding of these details of talk can the actions of both speaker and recipient be understood through one another's conversational alignments. It has been posited that such interactional alignments are not language-specific but rather a universal characteristic of naturally-occurring conversation (Moerman 1988; Beach and Lindstrom 1992). Evidence for this claim, however, is still unfolding in comparative studies such as this one which compare candidate universals in order to determine from empirically collected data whether insights into conversational data from English can, in fact, be applied to Spanish language materials. The primary purpose of this study is to compare the way in which the English particle *oh* is similar to and different from the Spanish panicle *ah* in the presentation of new information within conversation. The previous chapter has selected specific elements as potentially relevant to elucidate the ways in which the concept of change-of-state–a concept which has originated from English-language data–may prove useful in understanding how the particle *ah* is employed in Spanish. This chapter will proceed in examining the different environments within which the particle *ah* is used in Spanish conversation *vis-a-vis* the English use of *oh*. Functions which most closely

resemble functions in English will be treated first and compared with relevant examples in Spanish; those functions in Spanish, however, which either appear to contradict or contrast in some way with the English data will be discussed at later points in each section.

Receipt of Informings as New Information

The foremost category where *ah* is used are those instances where the speaker performs an utterance received as an informing. The recipient, upon hearing speaker's informing, uses *ah* as both an acknowledgment of the informing and a change-of-state relative to the information within the informing sequence. This is consistent with Heritage's notion of the particle *oh* as a signal of some change in "informed, counterinformed, or questioning parties can assert that, whereas they were previously ignorant, misinformed, or uninformed, they are now informed" (Heritage 1984: 315). Several features can be observed about English informing sequences that are relevant to the analysis of the Spanish *ah*. First, *oh* is used primarily as a receipt to some informing delivered in the preceding talk (Heritage 1984: 301) at systematic places which mark the change-of-state relevant.

The simplest cases of informings occur as free-standing examples of *ah*. Unlike the English data which, according to Heritage, "free-standing *oh* receipts of prior informings...are comparatively rare in the conversational data to hand" (1984:302), *ah* in Spanish occurs with more frequency. The simplest cases of the Spanish particle show important similarities to the English data. First, there is a similar organization of the occurrence of the particle after informing sequences. English data show *oh* occurring immediately after information which represents a change-of-state on the part of the recipient of talk. The particle in Spanish

demonstrates this same organization; *ah* normally serves as a receipt for some piece of new information mentioned in immediately preceding talk. Second, similar to *oh*, *ah* occurs after the point where a completed piece of information and at points where the talk recipient perceives an informing to be complete or almost complete. As free-standing particles, examples of *ah* appear to receipt information and thereby show talk-recipient's orientation to the information as it is presented by the teller. Examples (26), (27), and (28) illustrate these cases.

(26)[König: S1v]

1		D	(di)gamos que chiquitico partido y eso le echan cebolla
			it's chopped into little pieces and you put it with
2			tomate y un poquitico de a(g)ua entonces solo pone en
			onion tomato and a little water that you make into
3			como un frasgo=
			something like a paste=
4		C	=huh.
5		D	como si fuera una salsa=
			as if it were a salsa=
6	(1→)	S	=a:::::h=
7		D	=donde °uno° le echa a las papas fri::[t-
			=that °one° puts on french fri::[es

Example (26) is taken from a multi-party conversation where D and S are native speakers of Spanish and C is a non-native speaker. In D's extended turn, she explains how a typical Colombian dish is made by explicitly walking her interlocutors through the process of the preparation of this dish (lines 1-5). S, C, and the other interlocutors are following D's telling until she makes a comparison with the dish she is describing and another dish the other speakers are more probably familiar with: salsa sauce (line 5). As soon as this comparison is made

S utters *ah* immediately after D's informing in a stretched manner indicating the cognitive "click" or basis for comparison against which to S can understand the type of dish D has been describing in her extended turn. The placement of this particle is also important: the point at which *ah* occurs appears after the point of the informing in which the recipient of the informing understands what the teller is talking about. This is also consistent with Heritage's data concerning the placement of *oh* at points where the recipient perceives a "chunk" of information or a potential place for an informing sequence to end. The latter is relevant here; S demonstrates himself to be attendant to D's talk concerning her informing and places the *ah* receipt precisely at the end of a simile. Similar to *oh*, then, the particle *ah* appears to be used by recipients as a way to find the "edges" of discourse *in media res* within the informing sequence. Example (27) and (28) are similar.

(27) [UTCL 12b.01: simplified]

146		B:	oye te hace caer quitar el verano?
			oye *what're you doin' for summer?*
			((two lines omitted: understanding check sequence))
149		A:	este yo cr(e)o que sí
			well I think so yea
150			(0.2)
151	(2→)	B:	↑a::h↓
152		A:	pue(de) pasar cruel verano...
			could be a hot summer...

(28) [UTCL:L16.04: simplified]

12		P:	...me dijeron habías hablado
			...they told me you'd called
13			y me vine caminando pronto
			and I came just after that
14		C:	ah pues yo sí vine corriendo
			ah pues *I did come running*
15	(2→)	P:	ah .hh
16		C:	estaba sonando el teléfono cuando abrí la puerta
			the telephone was ringing when I opened the door

In (27) B nominates the topic of summer vacation plans as a potential topic for conversation. After an understanding check sequence (which is omitted), A responds to the inquiry affirmatively (line 149). The particle *ah* occurs in response to A in the previous turn; while the particle acts as a receipt to the information A presents, it also acts as a fugitive commentary on the nature of the information as B perceives it. The *ah* in (27) is stretched and shows features upward-then-downward intonation; it is possible that B emits *ah* as a reaction to an answer which she is not expecting or is in some way surprised by the answer. In other words, the *ah* in (27) serves both to receipt the reception of A's response to the initial inquiry while demonstrating an emotional element of surprise to that response. Example (28) is similar to (27). After the initial contribution of P in lines 12-13, C responds by adding some new information which is unknown to P whereby P responds at (1→) with *ah*. P's utterance of *ah* at (1→) is a direct response to C's immediately previous turn; it is both a response as well as an acknowledgment of the previous turn without presupposing anything more of the teller. Similar to (26), both (27) and (28) use the placement of *ah* in similar

manners: to demarcate a point within an informing as a chunk of information as well as a potential end of a sequence. In all three examples, then, *ah* appears in similar locations relative to newly presented information. These free-standing examples occur immediately after the turn where new information is presented by the teller to the recipient. In these places, *ah* acts as a receipt to the previous turn which demonstrates the recipient's orientation to the new information presented. In this respect, *ah* indicates a kind of personalization or internalization of newly presented information from an outside source. It was already mentioned that in line 151 of (27) the *ah* registers a kind of surprise or anticipation counter to what is expected by the producer of the particle. While (26) does not show a demonstrated anticipation but rather a spontaneous understanding or realizing through the use of a well-placed simile in line 5, the particle in this case is a token of the utterer's realization of his interlocutor's train of thought regarding the process she is describing. Finally, all three instances here also contrast with the English data even from the simplest level of organization.

Whereas the English data show that the free-standing particle *oh* not only receipts a previous but also acts to curtail the topic, *ah* as it is seen in (26) and (27) does not curtail the topic but rather allows either an elaboration (as in example (27)) or continuation of the same topic (as in example (26)). Compare (4) with (28).

(4) [Rah:B:1:1:12:1]

1		I:	ye:h .h uh:m (0.2) I've jis' rung tih teh- eh tell
2			you (0.3) uh the things 'av arrived from Barker'n
3			Stone'ou[:se,
4	(1→)	J:	[oh:::::
5			(.)
6	(2→)	J:	oh c'n I c'm rou:nd, hh

(28) [UTCL:L16.04: expanded]

12			...me dijeron habías hablado
			...they told me you'd called
13			y me vine caminando pronto
			and I came just after that
14		C:	ah pues yo sí vine corriendo
			ah pues *I did come running*
15	(3→)	P:	ah .hh
16		C:	estaba sonando el teléfono cuando abrí la puerta
			the telephone was ringing when I opened the door
17	(4→)	P:	ahh
18		C:	.hh a:h sí hablé .hhhh
			.hh a:h *yea I spoke* .hhh
19		P:	qué pasó
			what happened

Both examples show the *oh/ah* particle occurring immediately after an informing sequence as a receipt to that informing. The effect each particle has on the subsequent organization of talk, however, differs for each language. Example (4) illustrates that *oh* does not necessarily encourage a continuation of a telling but rather simply registers a recipient's response to an informing (1→) and that any further information a recipient may wish about an informing requires a separate inquiry besides the *oh* receipt. At (2→) the producer of the *oh* can be seen to make an additional inquiry after a slight pause. Example (28), on the other hand shows an opposite organization. The *ah* at (3→) receipts the informing that is subsequently encouraged afterwards. In fact, not until the a second *ah* is uttered at (4→) does the recipient move to close the topic and, at the next turn, the teller nominates a new topic (line 18).

This data has several implications. While a the *oh/ah* particles share characteristics such as receipting informings at chunks of information and potential endings to informing sequences and allowing continuations of informings to progress, each language has its own manner of structuring which function pertains to which environment. Whereas both languages employ the *oh/ah* particles as receipts for informings, by itself *oh* in English acts as a topic-curtailing particle while *ah* in Spanish regards the particle as either an encouragement for continuation or simply as a receipt with a secondary effect of permitting a continuation to occur. Not until the particle occurs in an environment where *ah* appears not as an isolated, free-standing unit but rather as part of a larger multi-turn orientation to the topic under discussion does *ah* become a topic-curtailing device. In terms of encouragement for further information or continuation of a telling, (4) from the English data presents the case that some additional turn or turn-component, such as a newsmark ("is that right?" or "you don't say", etc.) is required for a teller to expand upon a telling. The converse appears to be true for Spanish; free-standing particles in the Spanish data tends towards not prohibiting the continuation of an informing. This basic difference between the free-standing particles also may indicate a difference in orientation on the part of the recipient to informing sequences. The English data seems to indicate that the response which includes *oh* either free-standing particle or with additional turn-components is to be interpreted according to a standard which may indicate the recipient or utterer of the particle is in the process of making a speakership incipient move. In other words, *oh* in English appears to suggest to a speaker that the recipient who utters *oh* may be making advances towards assuming the conversational floor. This, in turn, suggests that the recipient of a telling orients towards the speaker using *oh* to signal a potential addition to the

discourse. The Spanish data, in contrast, seems to suggest something quite different from the English data. Instead of signaling a speaker incipient position, *ah* appears to be a more neutral particle in its free-standing form that signifies only acknowledgment and receipt of a previous turn. The examples which indicate that speakers do not hesitate with continuing their informing after a free-standing *ah* show that the Spanish token does not prohibit further topic development. This, in turn, may also suggest that the mechanism which permits speakers to continue with their turn also may permit recipients the ability to make their supposed change-of-state known to their interlocutors without interrupting the process of the informing itself. To a greater extent than the English *oh*, the token *ah* appears to "*claim* [*sic*] attention and/or understanding, rather than *showing* [*sic*] it or *evidencing* [*sic*] it" (Schegloff 1981: 78). This means that the *ah* particle in Spanish can be interpreted as either a cooperating with the speaker's informing or it is a withholding on the part of the recipient; in either case the important feature is that the placement of the particle is precisely calculated to fit into the ongoing talk of the speaker (Schegloff 1981: 86).

Compared to the English data, *ah* appears to permit a wider range of expressive responses to an informing. One of these responses includes the use of particular repeated elements of the informing or only the relevant portion of the informing which triggers the change-of-state. Sounds, words, or sometimes phrases come after the initial *ah*-preface as a marked form of acknowledgment on the part of the recipient towards new information presented by teller. In the cases in which the recipient of an informing uses *ah* + repetition to demonstrate a change-of-state the *ah*-unit can be either complete in it self by occurring as a free-standing particle, the simplest case, or it can add other components of talk which serve to amplify or assess the degree of change experienced by the recipient

concerning the information which is repeated. The *ah* token receipts the previous turn or turns as relevant to the informing while the repeated portion indicates the particular point within the informing sequence is relevant in terms of new information. In other words, some repeated element from a previous turn indicates that this particular word iconically represents the "aha!" that fills the information gap on the part of the recipient. Not only would this help the speaker to locate a particular point within an informing as informative from the recipient's point of view but the repetition may also have some direct effect on the recipient purportedly undergoing a change-of-state. Unlike other instances of *ah* in the Spanish informings data to date, this is the only function in which *ah* can appear either before or after the recipient's turn. When some aspect of the previous turn is repeated, the *ah* particle is not bound only to a pre-position but can also occur after the repeated information as well. Compare the following examples. Example (29) is taken from the opening of a telephone call where there is some technical difficulty between interlocutors where it appears that neither caller nor answerer can determine if the other one can hear the other.

(29) [UTCL:L16.02]

11		R:	e:hm (0.6) alo! me oye?
			e:hm (0.6) *hello! can you hear me*
12		M:	°a° la o:rden
			°at ° your service
13		R:	.hhh eh: María?
			.hhh eh: María
14		M:	sí con quién?
			yes with whom? (am I speaking)
15		R:	con Rónal(d) hh=
			with Ronald hh=
16	(1→)	M:	=a:h que o- Rónal(d)
			=a:h *uh o- Ronald*
17			(0.2)
18		R:	como está:s?
			how a:re you?

(30) [Post Party:I:14]

1		D:	Rice? °is in Louisiana°
2		M:	no:[:
3		F:	[Tex[as
4		M:	[Texa[s
5	(2→)	D:	[Texas (.) Rice (.) °yeh that's (right)°
6		A:	Heeyoosto:n

Example (29) is a deviation from the canonical telephone call where the identification-recognition sequence is performed in two quick moves. Normally, the one who answers the phone (M) would be the one who identifies herself first; however, due to a technical difficulty, R offers to identify M before M can self-

identify (line 13). As soon as she confirms R's identification, she requests a counter identification (line 14). Once M hears with whom she is at (1→) she uses an *ah*-preface and repeats her interlocutor's name. Example (30), on the other hand, illustrates a sequence in which ah *oh*-prefaced response is noticeably absent. When D, who is the focus of the sequence, realizes that he has wrongfully identified Rice in the state of Louisiana he is quickly corrected by F and M. Once D hears both interlocutors use "Texas" as the correct location of the university D uses repetition of "Texas (.) Rice (.)" at (5→) to "display [a] of consulting her own knowledge of the location and only then produces a confirmation ("°Yeh that's [right]°") which accepts the position asserted by M and F" (Heritage 1984: 314). It is interesting to note that both English and Spanish have this device of using repeated elements from previous turns which are then incorporated into change-of-state assertions. The difference between the two languages, however, is that English appears to use the repetition as a means to self-confirm an other-initiated correction whereas in Spanish the repeated elements are incorporated into a more general notion of being informed about some new matter as initiated by the recipient of the new information. The *ah* + repetition acts as a sign of recognition of the interlocutor where the *ah* token is a mental "aha!" and the repeated portion makes concrete what is being perceived. In other words, the use of *ah* + repetition acts as a discrete turn-unit which focuses the utterer's attention on the particular element within an informing sequence that triggers the "aha!" response.

Similar to the English counterpart, the placement of *ah* is an important consideration relative to new information. Similar to *oh*, *ah* tends to be placed immediately after the point of the informing where the informing is relevant to filling the information gap in the recipient's knowledge; it is at these points that the recipient changes his or her orientation to the informing itself by treating a

piece of information as if it were "new." The particle *ah* is the mechanism whereby the recipient demonstrates to the teller that information in the teller's informing is, indeed, in some way new[2]. The most useful place to consider this change in orientation is in *ah* + repetition places because, as was stated above, the recipients use the repeated item from the previous turn as the point which becomes iconic for demonstrating their newly informed state. The two following examples (31) and (32) illustrate the placement of the *ah* + repetition units. Both examples are discussing typical meals in Costa Rica and Colombia; the larger discourse is geared towards what food items participants have in common from one country to another.

(31) [König: S1v]

1	L	[arroz frijoles plátano maduro a- separados
		[rice beans ripe banana a- seperated
2		como el postre
		as a dessert
3		(0.2)
4		ensal*a*da de ↑repollo (0.2)
		cabbage ↑salad (0.2)
5	D	[agua]cate

---

2 Of course, simply because a recipient produces a particle such as *ah* to signal a piece of new information does not necessarily indicate that some element within an informing is new. Rather, through the use of *ah* as a particle of recognition, the recipient overtly performs an action which the teller recognizes as "this is new information" and thereby creating an interaction where teller and recipient's roles are made overt. A different sort of informing is where teller reveals some piece of information but instead of overtly confirming the informing as new, recipient either pretends or at least fails to overtly confirm the informing.

			[*avo*] *cado*
			((four lines omitted))
10			(.)
11		L	agua[cate
			avo[*cado*
12		D	[°también°
			[°*that too* °
13	(1→)	S	[ah:: [°aguaca::te°
			[°*avoca::do* °
14		L	[algún tipo de
			[*some type of*
15		C	he he he he he he he .hgh .hhh [.he
16		S	[me °encanta°
			I °love ° (those)
17		C	hugh huh
18			(0.3)
19		L	los hacemos también
			we do it that way too

In (31), D offers a potential ingredient item (line 5) which could be a member of the group which L is presenting between lines 1-4. It is a tentative ingredient because D and L come from different countries in Spanish-speaking Latin America: Colombia and Costa Rica respectively. Several lines after D's initial offer, L confirms the item by repeating it (line 11) thereby establishing a cultural and gastronomic commonality between the two countries and their views on what is and is not a common part of the typical diet. Once S, a native of the Texas-Mexico boarder region, hears *aguacate* mentioned (lines 5 and 11), he produces an *ah*-preface to his turn where he repeats the ingredient, " *°aguaca::te °*" (line

11), as something he also knows as familiar and a typical ingredient in everyday life. The *ah*-preface and repetition of the newly introduced information (*aguacate*) has an interesting function in this conversation. Similar to D's offering of a typical Colombian ingredient as a potential item of commonality to a Costa Rican, S's singling out a specific item from a list of potentially familiar foods shows solidarity with his Latin American interlocutors. The significance of the *ah* within this sequence is that it signals a recognition of a common item in S's experience as a bi-cultural member of the Chicano community, a community which is often regarded by many purists as "culturally peripheral" to a more mainstream Latin American culture. By responding strongly to the mention of "avocado" S may be affirming to himself as well to his interlocutors a particular aspect of his solidarity with Hispanic culture as he knows it through his own experience. More generally, the *ah*-preface serves to single out a particular point at which a recipient at talk recognizes an element familiar to him and his environment as an element which is familiar to others as a daily part of their environment as well. In other words, *ah* is the signal of recognition that something is unexpectedly familiar and the repetition of the word *aguacate* indicates that the item which is familiar is that item which is repeated. In (32) the repeated item serves a slightly different purpose.

(32) [König: S1v]

41		R	nosotros echamos zanahoria a:: (.) alberjas? y
			we put carrot a::: (.) peas? and
42			habichuelas (0.2) en el arroz
			beans (0.2) in the rice
43	(2→)	L	alberjas es petit pois petit pois son alberjas
			peas are petit pois petit pois are peas

44	(3→)	S	alberjas ahhh::
			peas ahhh::
45		L	es que c[omo
			it's li[ke

It appears that S's reaction in (32) is similar to his reaction in (31): a response cry of familiarity and recognition to the word *alberjas* (green peas)–with the minor exception that the repeated portion, *alberjas* (3→), appears before the *ah* token. However, more context is necessary to understand this example. In the course of this conversation, the term *petit pois* is appearing for a second time; the first time the term was mentioned by L during a previous point in this same conversation. (33) is the excerpt from the conversation where *petit pois* is first mentioned.

(33)[Koenig: S1v]

1		L	sí digamos vallnicas zanaho::ria=
			yea let's say beans car::rot=
2		D	=sí
3	(4→)	L	petit poi:s
4		D	q[ué es vallni[ca
			w[hat is vallni[ca
5		C	[petit poIS?
6		S	[petit POIS?
7			ha ha ha JA JA JA
8		C	ha ha ha
9			(.)
10		L	↑excu:se ↓me
11		D	ha ha ha
12		L	decimos petit pois como el peas

we say petit pois for peas

13		C	sí=
14	(5→)	S	=oh? petit pois ah::::?
15		D	petit pois y:: y:: y:: tuviste las otra cosa
			petit pois and:: and:: and:: you had something else

When L first mentioned *petit pois* at (4→) two things happen. While for L the use of the French loan word is normal in everyday Costa Rican discourse, for her interlocutors it is not. From the reaction of her interlocutors at lines 5-6, the use of *petit pois* appears to be a surprise. C and S demonstrate this surprise through the use of repetition of the particular item which is surprising for them; it is interesting that both C and S utter the exact same words at the exact same time with only slightly differing intonation. Second, C and S's reaction at (5-6) is one of incredulous surprise, a reaction which L takes as accusatory (line 10: "↑excu:se ↓me"). Not until line 12 does L explain the *petit pois* is part of the normal Costa Rican lexicon; it is curious, that instead of using the Spanish equivalent for *petit pois* she uses the English word "peas" (line 12) to express the equivalency of the French. In other words, despite the fact that L is a native Spanish speaker, the English equivalent of *petit pois* comes to mind before the Spanish equivalent. S's reaction at (5→) to L's explanation in line 12 is, like the explanation itself: a mixture of both Spanish and English. The structure of S's reaction is an *oh* + repeated element + *ah* where both *oh* and *ah* occur in the same utterance. The repeated element (*petit pois*) emphasizes the precise piece of information at which S recognizes the equivalency of *petit pois* and "peas" as well as the usage of the former in Costa Rica. This is significant when interpreting the use of S's *ah* in the terminal position in (32).

(32) [Köing: S1v: detail]

41		R	nosotros echamos zanahoria a:: (.) alberjas? y
			we put carrot a::: (.) peas? and
42			habichuelas (0.2) en el arroz
			beans (0.2) in the rice
43	(2→)	L	alberjas es petit pois petit pois son alberjas
			peas are petit pois petit pois are peas
44	(3→)	S	alberjas ahhh::
			peas ahhh::

Once L hears *alberjas* she recognizes the Spanish equivalent of *petit pois* and thereby takes a full turn to make the connection explicit between *alberjas* and *petit pois* at (2→). It is interesting that L does not use an *ah* token to mark recognition but rather prefers the use of repetition along the lines of a tautological definition: (x=y ∴ y=x) in order to point out the French-Spanish equivalency. As a bilingual speaker, S already understands *petit pois* via the English word "peas" (line 12) in (33). Similar to the turn S takes in (33) where he combines *oh* with *ah*, at (3→) the structure of his receipt is: repeated element + *ah* token. Once again, the repeated element marks the point at which S demonstrates a full comprehension of the new information presented. One interesting conclusion from this particular case is that, unlike the English data, the Spanish data indicates that the *ah*-token is able to go both before as well as after any additional turn-elements while retaining its receipt function. Furthermore, similar to the English *oh*, receipt token + turn element sequences appear to allow further elaboration along the same topic.

Similar to the English token *oh*, the Spanish *ah* appears to have an important role within the informing environment. Moreover, some general

characteristics of the *ah* token can be noted as basic functions as a change-of-state particle within this environment. Similar to the English particle *oh*, the Spanish token acts primarily as a receipt to new information which occurs in some previous turn relative to some piece of information which is regarded by the utterer of the particle as "new." Using the *ah* token as a response to a potentially informative statement has several ramifications. As a token of response, *ah* reifies speakership roles relative to the information uttered as well as to the teller of such information. By signaling that an element within an informing is informative suggests that the utterer of the token is a recipient of that information and that the information being presented is not already known to the recipient. It also assumes that the speaker delivering the information is more knowledgeable on the subject of the informing and therefore has something new to convey and that the information conveyed is relevant to the recipient's current state of knowledge or lack thereof. While registering a change on the part of the its utterer, *ah* also suggests a sort of emotional orientation to the new information. Surprise, realization–the "aha!" reaction, and possibly disbelief, the *ah* token is tied up with reactions other than purely intellectual ones in presenting a change-of-state to an interlocutor.

Unlike the English token *oh*, *ah* does not demonstrate topic curtailing tendencies within the informing environment. Instead, the Spanish token appears to encourage, or at least not discourage, topic elaborations and multi-turn topic continuations within an informing sequence. Similar to its English counterpart, while *ah* tends to appear at points in conversation where informings are judged to be complete or nearly so, the more important factor in Spanish appears to be the filling of the information gap resulting in a knowledge change-of-state regarding the new information. *Ah* does not appear in places where an informing recipient

does not believe the informing to be completed. Finally, *ah* often employs additional turn components, especially repetition, to indicate points at which a recipient comes to full awareness of his or her lack of information. While the token itself serves as a receipt to new information, repetition is used to pinpoint specific elements within an informing which serve as iconic moments which are taken by the recipient as representative of the entire informing sequence which demonstrate to teller key points of information relevant to the recipient's information gap.

Confirmation of an Informing

The major features of *ah* as a particle of receipt of new information most closely corresponds to notions of receipt based on English language data. However the Spanish data also indicate that there is another distinction which does not seem to appear within the English corpus concerning informing sequences. While both *ah* and *oh* indicate acknowledgment towards key elements within an informing sequence, the Spanish token also appears to take on an additional function of confirming the content of an informing, usually according to the form *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+ action). The main differences between a response to an informing and a confirmation of an informing can be illustrated in the following examples.

(28) [UTCL:L16.04: simplified]

12	P:	...me dijeron habías hablado
		...they told me you'd called
13		y me vine caminando pronto
		and I came just after that
14	C:	ah pues yo sí vine corriendo

ah pues *I did come running*

15 (1→) P: ah .hh

16 C: estaba sonando el teléfono cuando abrí la puerta

the telephone was ringing when I opened the door

(34) [UTCL 12b.01]

91 A: ...el viernes fui al hi el cómo

...that Friday I was going to hi *what's*

92 se llama Holt?

his name Holt?

93 (2→) B: ah sí?

ah *yes?*

94 A: a:h pues a la tal Raquel dichosa...

a:h *well there was that happy Rachel...*

The *ah* at (1→) receipts an addition that C makes in response to P's initial informing sequence; it has already been noted that the particle *ah* as a free-standing token does not necessarily encourage further elaboration but rather fails to disallow further topic continuation. In no way can it be stated that the token at (1→) can be seen as an encouragement for talk along the same or similar topic. New information is seen as relevant within an informing sequence from the perspective of the recipient. *Ah* acts as a response cry demonstrating to his or her interlocutor that some change-of-state regarding new information has occurred. In (34) the particle at (2→) also receipts the substance of the informing made in the previous turn (lines 91-92) but instead of merely acknowledging that turn, the *ah*

is a move to affirm and verify that information[3] by confirming the topic as a potential tellable. Even if the talk recipient did have some knowledge about a subject, it is possible that *ah* as confirmation would be relevant because it is possible that the teller may have some new or updated information which the recipient is as yet unawares. The *ah* + *sí* unit functions as a particle of confirmation that encourages elaboration on a telling similar to examples of *oh* which projects further turn components. Compare the following examples taken from English and Spanish data sets.

(13) [W:PC:1:(MJ)1:1]

1		J:	When d'z Sus'n g[o back=
2		M:	[.hhhh
3		J:	[( )
4		M:	[u-she: goes back on Satida:y=
5	(1→)	J:	=o[h:
6	(2→)	M:	[a:n:' Stev'n w'z here (.) all las'week...

(35) [König: S1v]

18	L	...to(d)avía no es nom- to(d)avía no es no he
		...but I it's not nom- I'm not I haven't
19		cocinão (.) cosas (.) ticas=
		made (.) anything (.) *Costarican*
20	C	=n[o?
21	D	[no?

---

3 In some respect, this confirmation is similar to the English *uh huh*, which is a continuer. Unlike *uh huh*, *ah* does not encourage a continuation but rather elicits talk along an established topic through confirming the topic as tellable.

22	(3→)	S	a::[h sí? ya]
23		R	[( )]
23	(4→)	L	lo que va a cocinar es gallo pinto?...
			what I'm going to cook is gallo pinto?...

The main difference between the *oh* at (1→) and the *ah* + *sí* at (3→) is that the English *oh* seems to be regularly accompanied by a stretched "an::" (also see example (14) above) indicating that speaker takes this utterance of *oh* as a cue for further elaboration along the same subject. In Spanish, it is interesting to note that at (3→), after L's informing (lines 18-19), recipients C, D, and S all respond and thereby confirm it in different ways: C and D do so by uttering *no* with and upward, inquisitive intonation movement whereas S performs a similar move by using *ah* + *sí*. It can be posited that the co-occurrence of an upwardly intoned *no* and *ah* + *sí* are fundamentally a similar phenomenon which serve not only to confirm L's previous turn but actually encourage a further elaboration at (4→). Whereas the English particle *oh* usually appears in free-standing form to project further turn components, *ah* normally appears with one or more additional units: *sí/bueno* (+ action). The action which typically follows *ah* + *sí/bueno* can either be a short word, such as *ya* in (35) or it can consist of a more complete turn units as examples (36)-(39) illustrate.

(36) [UTCL:L16.09]

20	C:	juj .hhh bueno: no lo que iba: (.) llamar a decirle es
		heh .hhh bueno: *no what I was going: (.) to call to tell her is*
21		que: (0.2) ↓a::h .hhh todavía no he (.) no he
		that: (0.2) ↓a::h *.hhh I still haven't (.) I haven't*
22		podido hablar con el señor del seguro y no sé si
		been able to talk with the man about insurance and I don't know if

23			si voy a poder llevar me carro y si no lo llevo que
			I'm going to be able to take by car and if I don't take it then
24			n– a lo mejor me voy con ellos .hhhh co::n él::::
			n- maybe it's better that I go with them .hhhh with:: him:::
25			(0.3) co::n (.) Güero y ella
			(0.3) with:: (.) Güero and her
26	(1→)	D:	ah (b)uen(o)
27		C:	en la mañana (.) pero que me (.) que me hable y
			in the morning (.) but I (.) have her call me and

Example (36) is taken from a telephone conversation where C is calling for someone other than D who is not present during the time of the call. D answers the phone and C begins informing D as to the reason for her call (lines 20-21); while in the process of relating the reason for the call, C implicitly makes a transition from telling D about the reason for the call to substituting D for the person for whom the call is intended. In other words, D becomes the unwitting and unsolicited recipient of the call with the implicit understanding that she will relay C's message to the party for whom it was originally intended. The receipt that D utters after C's extended telling, *ah* + *bueno* at (1→), serves two functions. First, it shows D's understanding of C's reasons for calling and comprehension of the message C wishes her to relay. In this respect, *ah* + *bueno* confirms C's telling. Second, the rising-then-falling intonation demonstrates D's hesitation to be the intermediary for such a message; in fact, this receipt uttered in this way appears to be a candidate topic-curtailing move which fails based on C's reception of the utterance at (1→). Sequentially, C's uptake of *ah* + *bueno* is one which either normally encourages or at least does not necessarily discourage the continuation starting at line 27. D's relationship to the new information C

presents is one of tolerant acceptance and comprehension; what the utterance at (1→) illustrates is that of an emotional comportation toward the circumstances under which D is placed not necessarily the content of the information itself. This orientation to contextualized circumstances is present not only in examples where the *ah + sí/bueno* is by itself, as in (35). In fact, many common examples of this particle occur at points where *ah + sí/bueno* are accompanied by other types of action in turn-additional units, particularly turns where the interlocutor actually makes a speakership bid through the utterance of *ah +sí/bueno*. (37), (38), and (39) illustrate.

(37) [König: S1v]

1		C	por por la comida o por por uh por la tarde o por la noche
			for for dinner or for for uh for the afternoon or for nighttime
2		L	eh lu- e:n el almuerzo
			eh lu- at lunchtime
3	(1→)	C	ah sí? [qué bien
			ah sí? [*that's great*
4		L	[in English quería de[cir lunch
			[*in English I was going to say lunch*

(38) [UTCL:L16.05]

10		C:	=apenas s– acabo de llegar de la escuela
			=barley a- I just now got home from school
11	(1→)	L:	ah:: sí »porque fue mi esp<u>o</u>so«
			ah:: sí *»because my hus<u>b</u>and went«* ((*up/over there*))
12		C:	°a::::y° sí: y dijeron que no estaba .hhh .hh
			°a::::y° *°and °yea: they said* [*he*] *wasn't* [*there*] *.hhh .hh*

(39) [UTCL: L16.03]

30		C:	sí- p- hay que ve una definición: no basada en
			yeah- p- I'm looking for a definition: not based in
31			los prejuicios norteamericanos (.) .hhh
			north american prejuices (.) .hhh
32		R:	.hhh oye- pues el libro de Dia(z) Guerreros
			.hhh oye- *well the that book by Diaz Guerreros*
33			°↓de:° ↑a la mejor?
			°↓of: ° ↓the uh best?
34	(1→)	C:	ah↑ sí pues allí lo busco (0.3)
			ah↑ sí pues *I'll go look for it (0.3)*
35		R:	é:[:l::] .hh
			h:[*e*::] *.hh*
36		C:	[a-] aquí lo tengo...
			[*a*-] *I've got it here...*

Each of these examples demonstrate varying degrees of transition relevance on the part of the recipient of talk. Progressively, each recipient has a larger role in speakership bids where the recipient changes from listener to speaker and thereby adding to the interactivity of the exchanges. (37) demonstrates the minimum that a recipient could use to confirm a piece of new information without fully changing speakership roles. This can be indicated by the overlap which occurs immediately after the *ah* + *sí* unit is uttered such that his interlocutor, L, perceives his confirmation not as a bid for speakership but as a confirmation of the information she presents in her previous turn. (38) and (39), on the other hand, can be seen as full speakership changes that occur as the action after the *ah* + *sí* confirmation. In (38) L uses her achieved turn as a method of confirming her interlocutor's informing based on her own independent knowledge of the situation. That is to

say, the *ah* + *sí* unit move to open up the confirming process and the action which follows that turn-initial unit actually performs the confirming. L adds the additional information in order to orally verify the information her interlocutor presents. The suggestion in (39) is a slightly different kind of informing where the teller is helping to direct the recipient as to where she should look for what she wants. The *ah* + *sí* sequence registers an "aha!" reaction on the part of the recipient whereby teller's suggestion results in a surprised "of course–why didn't I think of that" reaction. This reaction on the recipient's part is not only meant to inform her interlocutor about her change of state but is also a kind of self-talk as response cry. The recipient regards teller's suggestion as a plausible place for looking and so indicates through her response cry which the teller overhears. In each case of these cases, recipient uses *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+action) as a confirmation sequence to verify the status of the information presented by teller before any additional informing can continue. The mechanism which permits recipients to verify the status of the information tends to be either their own independent knowledge regarding circumstances of the situation or some exterior measure of plausibility inherent in the context of the informing itself. It is possible that if the recipient did not regard the content of the informing as either plausible or somehow verifiable according to his or her internal state of knowledge that *ah* may not occur or, if it were to occur, would be virtually indistinguishable from the genuine article. Overall, the presence of the *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+action) confirmation indicates that further talk is invited to continue along the same topic or the utterer of the confirmation sequence uses it as a means to assume speakership and elaborate on the topic under discussion. In both cases, further talk along the same topic is continued.

The main feature of the *ah* token in this environment is in its role as

confirming and verifying some aspect of an informing through treating the topic as potentially informative. As has been presented in this section, the particle does not occur as a free-standing particle but rather as part of a larger unit consisting of *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+action). Unlike the response to an informing environment, here the *ah* token always appears as a turn-initial unit. One of the functions the *ah* token plays is that of registering understanding and comprehension of an informing sequence. When new information is presented by a teller, the recipient uses *ah* to signal good reception and comprehension of the content of the message and thereby confirming the message itself. Another important aspect to this environment is the use of the *ah* unit to indicate a transition relevance place (TRP) where roles between talk recipient and teller are reversed. In these cases, the confirmation unit is used by the recipient in order to verify some aspect of teller's new information either 1) through consulting his or her independent knowledge on the matter; 2) through an encouragement towards the teller to elaborate on a certain element of the telling itself; or 3) through a circumstance which the recipient judges as plausible on the part of the teller. In any case, *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+action) can at times result in a speakership bid initiated from the recipient where the topic will be further discussed.

Speakership Incipiency

An essential component of the sequential organization of conversation involves the ways in which speaker/listener negotiate their roles through the kinds of turns each takes before and after a given phenomenon. Mandelbaum (1989) has shown that listeners do not only react to a speaker but rather can actually influence a telling's course through the appropriate use of questioning and acknowledgment of different portions of a telling than the speaker wishes to

emphasize. In this case, the role that the listener plays has a direct influence on the state of the telling; this is not speakership incipiency but a closely related concept which emphasizes the role of listener not as passive recipient of speaker's talk but rather as both a potential speaker and as an active participant in conversation whose responses can actually influence the status of the telling. Speakership incipiency, then, is that window of opportunity where the listener switches roles with speaker and vice versa; it is the degree of "probability that...[the recipient] is moving out of a recipient role and projecting further speaking" (Drummond and Hopper 1993b). Like the ability to influence the direction and extent of a telling, speakership incipiency is a negotiated interaction in which speaker and listener gauge one another's status not only through continuer and acknowledgment tokens but also though topic management, turn allocation, and cues which indicate completeness of a telling.

The concept of speakership incipiency indicates that the roles of speaker and listener, talk producer vs. talk recipient are constructs which change at various points during a conversation. While it is generally assumed that the speaker's role is to produce talk and the listener's role is to receive talk, this conception of speakership is a mechanical representation of what actually happens in naturally-occurring conversation. One of the concepts which speakership incipiency embraces is that through small conversational adjustments on the part of the listener, the speaker adjusts her talk according to the kinds of actions the listener performs. During a telling, for example, the speaker transmits information to the recipient regarding some tellable of interest both to speaker and recipient; rather than merely "receive" the information quietly, recipients regularly produce

acknowledgment tokens[4] which help speaker gauge how the recipient is receiving the transmitted information. While there are various functions of acknowledgment tokens, these particles have mostly been studied in isolation according to the rubric of their effect on subsequent interaction within talk. Indeed, the individual use of any one acknowledgment token can signal to a speaker to clarify, expand, continue or even give background information on a particular topic. When acknowledgment tokens are considered in a series, however, they can often be seen to reflect the state of the recipient as she or he approaches a speaker incipient state. In other words, a recipient's speaker incipient state can be loosely "tracked" according to the types of acknowledgment tokens which are produced at a given point within a given spate of talk (Drummond and Hopper 1993a; Jefferson 1983/1993). The ebb and flow within a conversational sequence involves not only states the point where recipients and speakers change roles but also the kinds of ongoing feedback recipients emit for speakers to gauge where they are in terms of making a speakership bid and thereby effect the transition of speakership.

Unproblematic conversation is talk in which the turn-taking mechanism functions smoothly without repair, overlaps, or any other difficulties resulting from speaker-to-listener role switching. Several studies have investigated the relationship between turn-taking and speakership change in regard to acknowledgment tokens within talk. Duncan and Niederehe developed a model

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4 The term "acknowledgment token" has come to represent a variety of interactional particles such as acknowledgers (*okay*, *alright*, *ah*, etc.), continuers (*uh huh*, *ah ja, mm*, *mm hmm*, etc.), and assessments (*good*, *bueno*, etc.). Drummond and Hopper (1993b) have argued that acknowledgment tokens is more inclusive and less vague than "back channels."

of speakership change which distinguish between back channel behavior and speaking turns. Their research indicates that "back channels came at points in the midst of speaking turns at which the auditor might legitimately claim turns...but often gave the impression that the auditor was actively avoiding the speaking turn" (Duncan and Niederehe 1974: 237). This study was initiated to find particular turn-switching mechanisms which could account for the smooth transition of speaker to listener and vice versa. The results, however, were inconclusive due to complexities of classification in auditor interventions (i.e., longer back channel responses which could be interpreted as a "speaking turn"); an incomplete repertoire of specific speaking turn switching mechanisms; and a lack of overt production of these signals. Later studies focused on the observation that many times recipients will, through their responses to speaker's talk, gradually build up their "momentum" in their responses which lead to a moment in which they assume speakership. Drummond and Hopper (1993b), citing Jefferson (1983/1993), investigate the difference between *mm hm* and *yeah* where the former "display[s] passive recipiency...whereas [the latter] displays speakership incipiency" (Drummond and Hopper 1993b: 164). While these specific examples demonstrate acknowledgment tokens that have speakership incipient relevance in English, it is reasonable to assume that this general framework could be relevant to language other than English provided that the languages investigated had some types of acknowledgment tokens equivalent in function to the English ones. The purpose of this study is not to investigate the range of acknowledgment tokens in Spanish nor does it intend to analyze series of tokens in a given interaction. Rather, the intent in this section is to examine the manner in which speakership incipiency relates to the production of *ah* in interaction.

The definition of speakership incipiency employed in this study is one which is concerned fundamentally with the manner in which teller and recipient change speakership roles, that is to say, from speaker to talk recipient and vice versa. Research into this area has come up with several different ways in which this change of roles tends to occur: suddenly, where the listener "breaks into" the conversation via self-selection in order to add to the discourse; gradually, where the listener might utter a series of utterances each with a cumulative effect whose sum results in a pinnacle moment where a speakership bid is produced (Drummond and Hopper 1993b); or through a more direct speakership bid which is neither direct nor based on a gradual bid but rather is somewhere between the two. The main issue, of course, is to investigate the way in which speakership incipiency revolves around the bids which enable the listener to become speaker in a given context.

Before one can consider the more general notion of "speakership incipiency" once must be assured that more specific characteristics are indeed present in a given conversation. Specifically, one must be sure that there is indeed a teller and a recipient. One can loosely define the notion of "teller" as a participant in talk who either through turn-constructional units or through extended spates of talk holds the floor for extended turn periods. Conversely, talk recipient can be defined as one who may interject short turns throughout another's extended spate of talk but who does not occupy the floor for more than a few seconds at a time. During this extended spate of talk the listener or talk-recipient is most often not completely silent but tends to produce small utterances which, once uttered, ends the recipient's turn and relinquishes the speakership floor back to the speaker. Furthermore, there must be some sort of dynamic exchange between the two interlocutors such that speakers are observed to become

recipients and vice versa. These loose parameters can then ensure that there will be some object of study concerning the notion of speakership change. While this does not account for a vast majority of the times in which a speakership change will result, the intent is not to construct an empirically valid theory of speakership change in Spanish but rather to understand the specific role *ah* plays within speakership incipiency and thereby further expanding the role this conversational particle plays in Spanish.

The previous section noted that *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+ action) is a common structure indicating a possible move towards speakership incipiency. In that section speakership incipiency is examined in terms of how it relates with a particular structure using *ah* + *sí/bueno*. (40) and (41) will build on the observations from the previous section.

(40) [UTCL 12b.01]

272		A:	desde las ocho est(oy) para(do) .hh
			from eight I was (already) there .hh
273		B:	.hh que si de las ocho seguro que
			.hh yeah if at eight surely that
274		A:	huh huh [huh
			huh huh[huh
275		B:	[no te iba (a) estar
			[no I was going to be there (with you)
276		A:	claro que no
			of course not
277		B:	... .hh ya acuéstate porque te– .hhuh huh
			... .hh go to bed already because you .hhuh huh
278	(1→)	A:	ah sí acostado ya estoy (.) ss:: tú que crees
			ah sí *I'm already in bed (.) ss:: you believe that*
279			que iba estar palado
			I was going to be there
280		B:	huhuh...

Although (40) is an example of the kind which may have been seen in the previous section, there is an important consideration which merits closer observation. It can be noted that the talk recipient, A, makes a successful speakership bid at (1→) which is prefaced by *ah + sí*. This bid for speakership is not an isolated event but rather occurs within a larger series of smaller turns spanning several turn-constructional units.

(40) [UTCL 12b.01: detail]

272		A:	desde las ocho est(oy) para(do) .hh
			from eight I was (already) there .hh
273		B:	.....
274		A:	huh huh [huh
275		B:	.....
276		A:	claro que no
			of course not
277		B:	.....
278	(1→)	A:	ah sí acostado ya estoy (.) ss:: tú que crees
			ah sí *I'm already in bed (.) ss:: you believe that*
279			que iba estar palado
			I was going to be there
280		B:	.....

Considered independent of one another, these turns are short rather insignificant in and of themselves. However once one considers A's turns as leading up to speakership at (1→) it can be noted that each turn indicates an increasingly interactive regarding A's role within conversation. In line 274 A's turn is a small laugh; in 276 a small turn which replies to a statement by B; and, finally, at (1→) A makes a speakership bid and performs an informing of her own. Example (41)

has similar characteristics.

(41) [UTCL:L16.02]

((Concerning some invitations that must be delivered))

52		R	.m esta lel' de las invitaciones del día
			.m that th- about the invitations for the day
53			de campo en el lote nuestro [.hh]hh
			at camp en our plot [*.hh*]hh
54		M:	[sí]
			[*yea*]
55		R:	tengo unas tres invitaciones– .hhh que son
			I have three invitations– .hhh that are
56			para cai- sedoña
			for ((over by)) sedoña street
57			(0.4)
58		M:	ya=
59		R:	=si Gerome me podría °ha°cer el favor y- y
			=if Gerome could °do° me a favor an- and
60			llevarlas allá?
			take them over?
61	(2→)	M:	a:hh y porqué no las dejas entonces
			a:hh *and why not leave them then*
62			acá arri[ba]
			just upstairs here
63		R:	[sí] las dejo en e:n la [portería]...
			[sí] *I'll leave then i:n the entryway...*

Similar to the speakership bid at (1→), at (2→) the recipient of talk, M, can be seen incrementally adding small comments leading up to the point where she actually

makes a larger contribution in the conversation.

(41) [UTCL:L16.02: detail]

52		R:	.....
53			.....
54		M:	[sí]
			[*yea*]
55		R:	.....
56			.....
57			(0.4)
58		M:	ya=
59		R:	.....
60			.....
61	(2→)	M:	a:hh y porqué no las dejas entonces
			a:hh *and why not leave them then*
62			acá arri[ba]
			just upstairs here
63		R:	.....

(41) is a more generalized restatement of (40) in terms of is turn structure: *ah* (+ *sí*)+ turn. Similar to other environments using *ah*, the token is used as a receipt for new or perceived new information in one of the immediately preceding turns. In these examples, however, *ah* is prefacing something slightly different than examples considered in previous sections. Instead of confirming or verifying some aspect of new information proceeding from the teller, the recipient uses *ah* as a means of acknowledging information in the preceding turn-constructional units and then building upon those preceding turns by creating a contrast or addition to that information based on the recipient's own knowledge or

experience. In this respect, the *ah* particle acts like a discourse marker which responds to some previous matter while permitting the recipient to add something distinctive to the conversation. The *ah* particle allows the recipient to respond to some element of talk a speaker may or may not have emphasized and thereby contributing to the discourse within the conversation[5].

The use of *ah* to confirm and verify some new information which in turn leads to a successful speakership bid can be highlighted by examining similar sequences in which *ah* result in an unsuccessful speakership bid. Sometimes recipients are not successful in assuming speakership despite having produced *ah*-initial responses. Heritage states that in English *oh* "is intersected with a stretched version of 'and' with which the prior speaker displays continued turn occupancy and a commitment to extend...with further talk" (1984: 327). Though there is the possibility that *ah* could occur and be interrupted by an prolonged *"y:::"*(the Spanish equivalent to *and*) from the speaker. To date there has been no support this supposition. Instead, there seems to be an equivalent manner of interrupting an turn-initial *ah* with either a stretched initial syllable or a topically-disjunctive marker such as *pero* (but). In either case the result is the same: the recipient attempts to orient to speaker's talk by offering an *ah*-prefaced response an additional turn component that is out bid by the speaker who obstinately holds the

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5 This function also seems to appear in English as well. Compare (40) and (41) with the following English datum.

(42) [Rah:II:1]

1		J:	=hello there I rang y'earlier b'tchu w'r ou:t,
2	(1→)	I:	↑Oh: I musta been at Des's mu:m's=
3		J:	=↓aoh::. h=

The Spanish data appears to confirm at least a latent function within English but appears to be more infrequent than in Spanish.

speakership floor and disallows anything more form the recipient than a token of acknowledgment. In (42) M's attempt to confirm R's response at (3→) is met with an overlapped continuation of R's response (line 24).

(42) [UTCL:L16.02]

21		M:	=qué ha bido?
			=how are things? (doing)
22		R:	.hh no: pues todo bien=
			.hh no: pues *everything's fine=*
23	(3→)	M:	=a:h bueno [me–]
			=a:h bueno [*I'm–*]
24		R:	[a:]fortuna(da)mente[.hh]
			[*f:*]*ortunately* [*.hh*]
25		M:	[me]
			[*I'm*]
26			alegro se fue tu familia...
			glad your family left...

As R responds to M's general inquiry (line 21), R produces a general, non-problematic response. M in turn confirms R's response at (3→) using something which can be approximated as an *ah* + *bueno* (+action) structure. As it can be seen, once M utters "a:h bueno" at (3→) R adds one more comment to his previous turn and thereby disallows M to continue with her "+action" portion of her turn where the action sequence would be the recipient's addition of new information. It is clear, however, that R does pause for a moment to allow M the opportunity to utter "a:h bueno"; it also seems clear to M that she perceives R to have completed his full turn before (3→). This implies that the same mechanism responsible recipients' perception when an informing sequence is hearably complete or nearly so is still in operation during potential speakership bids. Once

R hears M's acknowledgment-like structure, he immediately continues with a continuation of his turn in overlap with M's "me" in the latter part of the turn at (3→). By this it appears that once R hears M produce *ah* + *bueno* he assumes she is merely producing an acknowledgment of his previous turn and without waiting to hear if any "+action" will come after the acknowledgment, R simply treats M's turn at (3→) as if it were only an acknowledgment. The effect of this additional comment in line 24 is that of preventing M to complete her turn which would thereby grant her full speakership thus making her bid a successful one. Not until after R completes his short comment in line 24, however, does M renew her speakership bid by repeating the same particle, "me" (line 25), in what can only be assumed to be a recycled version of what her failed speakership bid may have looked like at (3→) had R not interrupted. Whether the utterance in lines 25-26 are identical to the statement which M would have made if she had made a successful speakership bid is impossible to say; what is possible to determine is that once R hears M produce the *ah* + *bueno* it is likely that he assumes a confirmation move on M's part and not a full speakership bid. The result of R's additional turn in line 24 is one of elaboration on a previous matter rather than a closing down and moving on to other topics, a move that M was attempting to initiate before R interrupts the sequence. M, then, is temporarily forced to assume a listenership role until R finishes his turn in line 24. As this example illustrates, speakership is not necessarily a planned event that will take place at a given time within a conversation but rather is the result of negotiation between interlocutors according to the situation within a particular moment of talk.

Whereas speakership incipiency charts the points where speakers and listeners switch roles, speakership negotiation occurs at those points where a recipient begins to assert "actions to end recipient status and to share or take the

floor" (Drummond and Hopper 1993b: 164). In some respect every instance of speakership incipiency has an element of negotiation inherent within it. Instances where interlocutors vie over speakership through overlap, changes in volume, and repetition are interesting not based on the fact that speakership change is occurring but rather because participants in talk are actively negotiating over who will take the next turns and how they will be delivered. Speakership negotiation often revolves around the issues of interpersonal power where the speaker and recipient are perceived to be "in competition" (Heritage 1984: 331; Hopper 1992: 120-137) with one another to take the conversational floor. Examples taken from Spanish data indicate that when speakership negotiation occurs the speaker is usually the one who continues talking by simply extends his or her turn despite speakership bids advanced by the recipient or the speaker permits only a brief acknowledgment turn by the recipient before resuming talk. It is possible that gender, class, and educational status can bear on who "wins" the right to talk at any given time. Two of the ways in which speakership negotiation is achieved through talk are through turn allocation and topic nomination. Through these two devices participants in conversation decide who gets to talk when. Consider the following example.

(43) [UTCL:L16.01]

10		R:	...con mucho gusto te hubiéramos llevão
			...with pleasure we would have taken you
11	(4→)	D:	ah:: muchas gr[acias
			ah:: *thanks a[lot*
12		R:	[en qué andas ahora
			[*what are you doing right now*
13		D:	no na' yo soy acosta(d)a (.)...
			uh nothin' I'm getting ready for bed (.)...

This is a simple example of speakership negotiation based on one participant's

perception of the other's projected or anticipated contributions in talk. The negotiation in this sequence can be illustrated by both turn allocation and topic management. D responds to R at (4→) with a "thank you" which is prefaced by a stretched *ah*. In some respects, this example is similar to (42). Both examples illustrate the recipient at (3→) and (4→) making moves to acknowledge and affirm some aspect of the previous turn while their speaker interlocutors both take these turns as performing a face-value act. In (42) that act was merely responding to the speaker's greeting response; (43) it happens to be thanking. When D responds to R at (4→) with "ah:: muchas gracias," as soon as R hears D's response he hears and understands D's response as a thanking and, because he understands her response assumes that it will not be anything more than a thanking sequence. Before D can complete her action of thanking, R begins his next turn which is topically disjunctive to the previous matter; R takes D's utterance at (4→) as an opportunity to introduce a new topic into the discussion. The result of the negotiation is that speaker ® anticipates recipient's response and by accepting the response curtails it through beginning his next turn and initiating a new topic in that turn. Not only is speaker managing speakership turns because he decides how much and when recipient can contribute but he also decides when the topic is to be changed. This case is not uncommon in that the new information being supplied is that of the speaker taking recipient's response at face value and in turn initiating some other action, such as nominating a new topic or continuing a current topic while downplaying recipient's participation in a given sequence. The overall effect, as can be seen in (43), is that speaker precludes any further talk as it is initiated by recipient on a given topic. The interesting characteristic of this type of negotiation is not, necessarily, that speaker is as closely attentive to recipient's talk but rather that speaker allows recipient a turn which is

characterized from the speaker's point of view to be only an acknowledgment of the speaker's own previous utterance; once the speaker recognizes this acknowledgment as an acknowledgment the speaker almost always intrudes upon the recipient's turn through overlap when speaker resumes talk. Turn allocation and topic management in relation to new information, then, is manipulated through the speaker's perceptions of the discourse itself. At times, the speaker assumes the recipient's response will be a receipt while disregarding other turn-additional elements which may indicate a speakership bid; (42) can be taken as an example where this can be demonstrated occurring. Other times, however, the speaker accurately projects the recipient's response as an acknowledgment receipt. Take the following example.

(44) [König: S1v]

47		L	la(s) latitas en que viene
			the cans they come in
48		C	sí=
49		L	=siempre °d°icen petit pois
			=always say petit pois
50	(5→)	R	ga[h::::::]
51	(6→)	L	[°i°t makes s]ense
52		C	sí
53	(7→)	S	a[h::::
54	(8→)	L	[si se acostumbró a decirle...
			[*if ((one)) is accustomed to saying...*

L is the primary teller in this sequence; she is explaining that, in Costa Rica, canned peas are referred to by their French name, *petit pois*. Two recipients respond using *ah* at (5→) and (7→). In both cases, the *ah* is stretched and, in the

case of (5→) the *ah* is mitigated by an initial guttural sound. Also, after each utterance of *ah*, L is the first participant to speak at (6→) and (8→) in which case she begins before the stretched *ah*'s are fully complete. It could be argued that through her action of assuming speakership before the full completion of *ah*, she prohibits potential speakership bids from R and S respectively. This interruption of the recipient talk is accurately gauged by the speaker in order to further advance the informing sequence itself over a period of several turns; the new information which speaker introduces in the overlap is possible by the recipient's responses and the speaker's perception of those responses as acknowledgments that orients recipients to the speaker's continuous informing. It is important to compare this example with (42):

(42) [UTCL:L16.02: detail]

23	(3→)	M:	=a:h bueno [me–]
			=a:h bueno [*I'm*–]
24		R:	[a:]fortuna(da)mente[.hh]
			[*f:*]*ortunately* [*.hh*]
25		M:	[me]...
			[*I'm*]...

As is stated above, (42) illustrates speaker projecting a continuative turn at line 24 after hearing M's response to his previous turn at (3→). Through M does acknowledge R's previous turn she also appears to be making a speakership bid that is cut off by the speaker's continued turn. Example (42) is very different relative to (44). In (42) the interruption which R performs by cutting off M's potential speakership bid at (4→) is not to provide more or some new information to the discourse but rather to extend his previous turn. Rather than the speaker

who extends the previous turn in order to present some new information within the informing itself as in (44), the new information is presented by the recipient (M) after her repair in line 25. M's turn in (42) is a forced turn-constructional unit through R's interruption. (44), on the other hand, has a different organization.

(44) [König: S1v: detail]

47		L	la(s) latitas en que viene
			the cans they come in
48		C	...
49		L	=siempre °d°icen petit pois
			=always say petit pois
50		R	...
51	(6→)	L	[°i°t makes s]ense
52		C	...
53		S	...
54	(8→)	L	[si se acostumbró a decirle...
			[if ((one)) is accustomed to saying...

In (44), the informing as it is performed by the speaker can be seen as composed of several turns, responding to recipient's responses through the presentation of additional information. L uses her power as speaker to allocate turns and manage topic development in response to her interlocutor's response to her own informing. While L does interrupt her interlocutor's response *ah*'s, she uses the interruptions as points of progressively interjecting new information based on the responses of her interlocutors. In this way the informing is managed as a multi-unit informing where the topic remains the same but turn allocation is negotiated based on the recipient's demonstrated actions towards the informing itself. The newness of information, then, makes her turns appropriate because she orients to

her interlocutor's receipts of her informing which indicates that her turn-constructional informing is, indeed, presenting new information.

The speakership incipiency environment is a rather different environment for the placement of *ah*. While in other environments the token is employed primarily for acknowledging and receipting previous turns, here *ah* has an opportunity in which to influence the turn-taking mechanism which is responsible for most conversational encounters. In particular, however, within this environment *ah* serves as a basic mechanism of achieving speakership for the recipient who utters the particle or as a sign for the holder of the conversational floor to continue her or his turn either by elaborating on talk already in progress or in nominating a new topic for discussion. Two basic consequences can be initiated through the use of *ah* according to the particular aspect of talk in which the token responds; in both cases, the recipient is observed to be the utterer of *ah*. First, the *ah* token is responsible for responding or topicalizing some aspect of a previous turn; here *ah* continues its role as a receipt token which is essentially backward looking. Examples where the recipient utters *ah* and the next turn is filled with the previous speaker's topically disjunctive or continued speech from a previous turn illustrate this function. Much like previous sections where *ah* acts as a response cry of filling a perceived information gap on the part of the utterer, the particle is a performative of understanding or of being "clued in" to new information as it is presented from the speaker's previous turn. In most cases, the next speaker (who is also usually the speaker immediately before the turn in which *ah* is uttered) hears the *ah* response and accepts it as an acknowledgment of the information being presented in previous turns; furthermore, speaker usually takes this acknowledgment at face value by assuming that the *ah* is nothing more than an acknowledgment which, sometimes, prevents recipients from making

successful speakership bids. In these cases *ah*-prefaced turns work against recipients who are in the process of acknowledging previous turns but wish to add something new to the discourse themselves by making a speakership bid after their *ah*-initial turn. In this case, *ah* does not permit speaker from assuming speakership and adding something new to the discourse. Second, the *ah* token can also be used as an anticipatory particle for an additional turn unit uttered not by the teller but rather by the recipient who, by adding some additional action to the *ah* sequence, makes a speakership bid to achieve the conversational floor. This case is opposite to the first consequence. Whereas the previous consequence prevents the recipient from achieving the floor, here through the use of *ah* the recipient is able to make a successful speakership bid and introduce something into the discourse either along the same topic as the previous turn or perhaps by nominating a new topic for discussion. Examples of this case present the utterer of the particle conforming to the *ah* (+*sí/bueno*) +action format where the subsequent turn serves to present some new information into the discourse of the conversation. This sequence could be considered a two-move turn. First, the *ah* moves to confirm some element of talk in a previous turn by acknowledging the talk; once uttered, however, *ah* serves to preface some other turn-additional component in which the recipient moves out of recipientship and into speakership through the subsequent action. As with the first consequence, the recipient has the ability to nominate a new topic and redirect the course of the talk or to simply elaborate on the topic already in process thereby advancing the current topic. In either case the ability of the recipient is prefaced through *ah* which is not able to occur in any other position other than a turn-initial one. Once the speakership bid is made and the once-recipient moves into speakership it is unclear whether the recipient is then considered as the "dominant speaker" or merely as the participant

who holds the conversational floor for a turn. While it is possible that this structure could initiate a sequence where the recipient then takes the dominant speakership role, data to confirm this hypothesis has not yet surfaced.

Telephone #1: Late Recognition

Some examples of the *ah* token appear only in specific contexts such as telephone calls. Over the last hundred years the telephone has gone from Thomas Edison's pipe dream to a basic fixture within the industrialized world. In terms of conversation, the telephone functions rather differently than face-to-face conversation mainly because the only cues which are present are aural ones: the visual channel is totally absent. With the advent of conversation analysis researchers began to use the telephone as a way of investigating the aural mechanics of conversation without the visual channel. Initial research (Beattie, Geoffrey W. and P. J. Barnard 1979) using the telephone suspected that the turn-taking mechanism would be flawed when interlocutors did not have access to the visual channel. Initial hypotheses postulated that speakership change in face-to-face conversation was based on both aural (or linguistic) and visual cues; because telephone conversation precluded the use of visual cues, telephone conversation was suspected to be less fluent than face-to-face conversation. This study and the ones which it inspired posited that conversation was primarily a psychological function of communication in which the role of the visual channel was primary to such diverse phenomenon as the smooth transition of speakership between interlocutors, topic management, and back channel responses. With the advent of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's turn-taking model of conversation (1978) a more structural approach was applied towards the analysis of conversation. Within this model conversation is analyzed as part of a larger, contextualized system of

interactions which are organized in coherent linguistic units. Both micro and macro level organization is evident to the researcher; while turn allocation and topic management might be examples of micro-level organization, telephone calls could be examples of macro-level organization. Within each call a typical sequence of events tend to occur for the phenomenon to be interpreted and understood by those who use telephone calls for communication. Each call consists of: an opening, where interlocutors greet one another, introduce themselves, and conduct general inquiries; a middle, where interlocutors begin conducting the business at hand and reveal the reason for the call; and an end, where interlocutors conclude any unfinished business and take leave from one another. Also, each part of the call is organized according to various conversational devices determined by the same system of rule-governed behavior which face-to-face conversation is governed. These various parts which make up a telephone call can be recognized not only by virtue of the kind of talk that takes place within each part but also through the place in which each part occurs sequentially.

At the beginning of a phone call there are certain things which participants do in order to signal to one another that a telephone call is underway. The sequence of events which occurs at the beginnings of telephone calls are called "openings" which consist of the range of preliminary activities which participants involved in before moving on to the middle portion of the conversation. Within an opening sequence, interlocutors typically greet, identify, recognize, and inquire from one another before getting to the matters at hand in the call itself. The structure of a canonical telephone opening (Schegloff 1986) can be represented as several pairs of interactions which typically occur adjacent to one another: summons-answer, identification-recognition, greetings, general inquiry-response.

Example (45) will serve as a template for further explicating a general framework of the canonical call.

(45) [UTCL: L16.04]

	(a)		((ring or summons))
1			...
2		P:	hola .hh
			hello .hh
3	(b)	C:	hola quien habla
			hello who's speaking
4		P:	Patti Nuñez
5	(d)	C:	Patti- cómo estás
			Patti- how are you
6		P:	bien y tú?
			fine and you?

The *summons-answer* (a) is the initial interaction which initiates conversation on the telephone between two individuals. The first turn of the conversation is the ring of the phone which represents the default "voice" of the caller summoning someone to take part in a conversation. The summons is considered the first part of an adjacency pair structure where the summons itself is the first pair-part and the answer as the second pair-part. The call recipient's action of answering the summons provides a voice sample which, in turn, helps transition into the next tier of the opening–the identification-recognition sequence.

(45) [UTCL: L16.04]

	(a)		((ring or summons))
1			...
2	(b)	P:	hola .hh
			hello

In (45), C is making the call to P who answers the summons in line 2. At this stage speakership roles are structurally assigned to participants: caller is the default the speaker and the answerer the call recipient. Within the structure of the call the caller is at a structural advantage relative to the answerer. Not only does the caller choose the time and place to make a call, the caller has an advantage in the identification-recognition sequence because the caller typically speaks in the second turn of the call. This means the when the answerer answers with "hello" or some variation, this answer provides speaker with a preliminary speech sample that the recipient does not yet have. The call recipient, on the other hand, is at a disadvantage. Unless a call is prearranged and anticipated, the call comes at an unexpected time in which case the answerer must wait for a brief voice sample from the caller during the second turn of the call. All this presumes that telephone conversations occur in "pure" environments where the technology offers no great distractions nor any significant barriers to the opening sequences of a call. The second phase of the opening is the *identification-recognition* (b) sequence. This phase of the opening provides the structural mechanism whereby caller and call recipient proceed towards attempting to discover who the other is. As noted above, the caller usually has the upper hand in this phase as the recipient's first turn provides caller with a voice sample which can then be used for identification/recognition purposes. The caller's first turn occurs in this phase resulting in a voice sample for recipient to use for similar purposes. Most

problems in phone conversation arise at this point in the opening which can be seen in (45):

(45) [UTCL: L16.04: detail]

3	(b)	C:	hola quien habla
			hello who's speaking
4		P:	Patti Nuñez

C does not recognize from the small voice sample ("hola" in line 2) who has answered the summons. C's method of bringing about identification of the call recipient is to directly inquire as to who has answered the summons ("quién habla" in line 3). P, answering C's inquiry, presents two further resources to help C in recognizing her identity. At 4, P provides C with a second voice sample; second, and more directly, P self-identifies making her identity known to her caller through her name ("Patti Núñez"). The interesting thing in this exchange is that P appears to have already identified her interlocutor[6]. The third phase of the opening involves mutual *greetings*. Once interlocutors have identified and recognized one another and (re-)established any relationship which may be present, they typically move to greet one another. The sequence in (45) deviates from the canonical call by skipping directly from identification-recognition to the final phase–general inquiry-response. This skipping from one point to another usually indicates intimacy or at least regular contact either in face-to-face or over the phone. In (45), C and P are good friends and happen to be going to the theater together in a few hours. Finally, the last stage of the opening involves a *general*

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6 C in data set is a non-native speaker of Spanish living in Colombia. It is probable that C's own voice cues, i.e., intonation and accent, give C's identity away before C can recognize P. In this case, P appears to have the advantage due to paralinguistic resources available to her and not to C.

inquiry-response (d). Between intimates, general inquiries are issued and responded to as the final step in the opening sequence.

(45) [UTCL: L16.04: detail]

5	(d)	C:	Patti- cómo estás
			Patti- how are you
6		P:	bien y tú?
			fine and you?

In (45), C repeats P's name as a token of recognition and then restarts her turn by initiating a general inquiry ("cómo estás") in line 5. P's response is adjacent to the inquiry, indicating a preferred, non-problematic response. While these four elements tend to be present in canonical calls, often times deviations from the canonical pattern are more regular than the ideal form. This is particularly true of openings in which either one or both parties have difficulty in identifying the other. In countries where the telephone service may not be state-of-the-art but rather decades old, many times interlocutors have problems not only during the openings but throughout the conversation itself due to interference, unreliable telephone lines, and old equipment including telephones themselves. In many respects this technology serves as a socialization device which can, over time, cause the evolution of social changes during opening sequences and conversations themselves. When a problem presents itself during an opening sequence, it tends to be one of two problems: verification that someone (either from the caller or the answerer's perspective) is, indeed, on the other end; and problems of identifying or recognizing the party on the other end. While the former is irksome due to unreliable technological problems, the latter is the one which seems to cause most problems. This section will deal with the issue of *ah* in the late recognition of an interlocutor during telephone openings.

The most fundamental aspect of the opening sequence in this study is that of the identification-recognition sequence just after a summons is answered. The manner in which interlocutors respond to one another during the call is dependent upon dividing potential telephone conversational partners into two classes: "those whom we recognize (and to whom we should speak) and those whom we do not recognize (and to whom we should not speak)" (Hopper 1992: 58). If either caller or answerer is recognized within the opening sequence, conversation will go in one direction–a direction which is suited for those who familiar; if neither party is recognized within the first few seconds of the call conversation is more likely to proceed along the lines established for strangers and those who are "unknown." Sometimes it happens that those who would usually be classified within the category of "familiar" are temporarily treated as if they were unfamiliar due to technological interference or some other mishap. In these cases the problem occurs in the identification-recognition sequence within the opening sequence. After a short repair sequence where the perceived unfamiliar voices are further and more specifically asked to identify themselves they are eventually recognized and the conversation proceeds with the initially unrecognized participant as a familiar one. The role of the particle *ah* in this environment is once the unfamiliar participant is recognized; the participant who performs the recognizing utters *ah* as a sign that now, after a difficult recognition sequence, the unfamiliar is now perceived as familiar after all. *Ah*, then, performs the function of signaling that a conceptual change has occurred and the cautious barriers which were initially brought up towards an unfamiliar can now be dropped in the presence of a familiar. Also, there is another implication that the recognition should have been made at some previous point. This change is part and parcel of the recognition process whereby one participant of the call comes to the realization that the person

with whom she or he is conversing is not an unfamiliar but rather is familiar after all. One of the consequences of this type of environment is the tacit assumptions about the manner in which the perceived unfamiliar parties believe they should be perceived and identified. Because under normal circumstances those who are familiar to one another recognize each other's voices without having to explicitly self-identify, in sequences where normally familiar interlocutors are all-of-a-sudden perceived as unfamiliar, they must respond to questions as if they were unfamiliars (Schegloff 1979: 59-61). Consider (45) and (29) once again.

(45) [UTCL: L16.04]

			((ring))
1			...
2		P:	hola .hh
			hello
3		C:	hola quien habla
			hello who's speaking
4		P:	Patti Nuñez
5	(1→)	C:	Patti- cómo estás
			Patti- how are you
6		P:	bien y tú?
			fine and you?

While *ah* does not explicitly occur in this example, a familiar pattern emerges at (1→) where, instead of *ah* a repetition of a portion of the repeated line takes its place at the point where C, the caller, recognizes her interlocutor P. Repeated elements, similar to other environments already commented upon above, can at times take the place of *ah* or some other recognition particle by recycling the piece

of information upon which recognition is contingent. (29) shows a similar pattern.

(29) [UTCL:L16.02]

11		R:	e:hm (0.6) alo! me oye?
			e:hm (0.6) hello! can you hear me
12		M:	°a° la o:rden
			at your service
13		R:	.hhh eh: María?
			.hhh eh: María
14		M:	sí con quién?
			yes with whom? (am I speaking)
15		R:	con Rónal(d) hh=
			with Ronald hh=
16	(2→)	M:	=a:h que o- (.) Rónal(d)
			=a:h with uh- (.) Ronald
17			(0.2)
18		R:	como está:s?...
			how a:re you?...

Once again, this example is taken from a call where both caller and answerer are unsure about whether there is anyone on the other end and spend the first 10 seconds attempting to verify whether anyone is on the other end of the call or not. Once both participants are sure that the other is, indeed, on the other end (line 11) they begin the identification-recognition sequence (lines 13-16). R initiates by venturing a guess as to who the answerer is in line 13; M confirms his guess ("sí") but does not recognize R and so adds "con quién" ("with whom am I speaking") in line 14. In calls where participants recognize each other only through voice samples, there is not need for overt identification inquiries. In these cases, when participants recognize one another as familiar do not usually self-identify but,

instead, proceed in the opening as if each of the interlocutors were recognized[7]. Schgeloff notes that overt identification inquiries, such as the one M performs in line 14, are actually dispreferred to voice samples because overt inquiries in openings suggest the presence of an unknown party (Schegloff 1979: 50). Once R does identify himself (line 15), M produces an *ah* token at (2→) and repeats R's name:

(29) [UTCL:L16.02: detail]

16	(2→)	M:	=a:h que o- (.) Rónal(d)
			=a:h *with uh- (.) Ronald*
17			(0.2)
18		R:	como está:s?...
			how a:re you?...

Instead of combining the greeting with her recognition, M simply uses her full turn at (2→) to acknowledge and recognize R. The slight gap (0.2 seconds) at line 17 seems to indicate that R may have been expecting something more from M after her recognition but, when nothing is forthcoming, begins the greeting in his next turn (line 18). In example (45), even though there is no *ah* token, the participant who performs the recognizing does combine the recognition with the first move

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7 An interesting possibility for a sequence such as this might suggest that either or both participants do not actually recognize one another but simply "go along" as if they did in order to proceed into the conversation where they may or may not eventually recognize one another. This sort of deception in recognition has been noted to occur between familiars. Another possibility is that if a familiar's specific identity immediately recognized (or misrecognized) the conversation may proceed hoping that the unrecognized party will eventually be recognized. In both cases, the recognizer's feels that by not recognizing a familiar voice may cause a face threat which must be avoided until all possible avenues of recognition have been exhausted.

of the greeting sequence, something which R seems to expect in (29). This could indicate that there are two different types of opening sequences involving the use of identification-recognition and greetings, one for those considered familiar and one for those considered unfamiliar. The organization of the *ah* token, then, in these last two examples is one which both facilitates the recognition of the perceived unknown party with an implied extension which normally proceeds into some other element of talk, such as the greeting sequence. (46) elaborates on this concept.

(46) [UTCL:L16.09]

((no audible ring))

1		J:	°bueno°
			°yeah°
2		C:	.hhh bueno se encuentra Rosario
			.hhh yeah is Rosario there
3		J:	no:? el (.) °no° 'stá
			no:? sh- (.) °not° here
4			(0.3)
5		C:	habla Christina
			it's Christina
6	(3→)	J:	ah Christina no no está Christina se salió
			ah *Christina no no (she's) not here Christina (she) went out*
7			fíjate a: a dejar flores a la Virgen...
			listen to: to offer flowers to the Virgen...

In (46), *ah* does appear at (3→). In this call it can be demonstrated that the caller immediately recognizes from the small voice sample of the summons answer that the party with whom she wishes to speak ("Rosario") has not answered the phone. C's response repeats the answer "bueno" (line 2) and requests the person whom

she would like to speak. C's question in line 2 "se encuentra Rosario" is a "switchboard request" whereby the caller, in the initial few turns, recognizes that the answerer is not the intended recipient for the call and therefore inquires of the answerer as to the whereabouts of the intended recipient (Schegloff 1979: 46). Once C discovers that her intended recipient is not there, she self-identifies (line 5) whereupon J produces *ah* + name, explicitly recognizing the caller (3→). Similar to C's response, J repeats C's name after the *ah* token, repeats that the intended recipient is not present, and gives the caller more detailed information as to Rosario's whereabouts. Once C is recognized as a familiar, not only does J reiterate the information C already knows but she presents her with more information which initiates an entire conversation separate from the one C anticipated at the beginning. In this case, the status of recognized from J's viewpoint is equivalent with the kinds of things which those who are familiar would be interested in knowing: where Rosario went. The *ah* particle, then, can be used not only to signal this answerer's change of state from not recognizing the caller to recognizing her but also as a preface for supplying more new information for the caller through assuming speakership as is discussed in the previous section.

Although *ah* is one of the tokens in which one of the participants in conversation use to signal recognition of their interlocutor, it is by no means the only resource which can perform this function. Repetition has already been discussed as taking the place of *ah* within the recognition portion of the opening; the particle *ay* can also serve a similar function within this environment as well. Example (47) illustrates.

(47) [UTCL:L16.05]

((ring))

1		C:	... (.) bueno .hh
			... (.) yeah .hh
2		L:	Christina
			Christina
3		C:	ah ja?
			uh huh?
4		L:	hola (.) habla Lisela Bustamante
			hi (.) it's Lisela Bustamante
5	(4→)	C:	a::y ho::la
			a::y *hello::*
6		L:	cómo estás
			how are you
7			(0.3)
8		C:	ay (.) no sabes: (0.2)...
			ay (.) *you don't even kno:w (0.2)...*

Unlike the other openings in this environment, this call is between two participants who are more acquaintances rather than intimates or friends. Notice that once the summons has been answered, instead of immediately reciprocating "hola" the caller, L, guesses (correctly) as to who the identity of the answerer is by saying her name. When C confirms her guess as correct, L then says "hola" (line 4) and self-identifies, as if she knew beforehand that the answerer, C, would not recognize her voice from her previous turn. C's next turn is one of recognition at (4→). Instead of producing *ah* C produces *ay* as a token of recognition. Once L realizes she has been recognized by the answerer, she moves into the greeting stage of the opening. Similar to other sequences, this one uses

the recognition particle as a response to an identification sequence. In this case, instead of using *ah* the answerer uses *ay* as a variant to signal recognition of her interlocutor.

This section has been dedicated to the analysis of *ah* in the specific environment of the telephone opening and, more specifically, the identification-recognition sequence. This particular sequence within the telephone opening has ramifications not only for the first phase of a typical telephone call but of the entire call itself. In recognizing one's interlocutor, participants in calls categorize one another into one of two basic categories: familiar or recognized and unfamiliar or unrecognized. Whether one falls into one or the other of these basic categories will determine what sort of interaction the call, as a whole, will be. As is noted above, there are different ways in which recognized and unrecognized participants are treated. As this section has demonstrated, however, there are occasional mishaps in the identification-recognition sequences in which those who would normally fall into the "familiar" category are, temporarily, classified as unfamiliar. This can be due to technological factors, such as a bad connection, a glitch in the telephone wires, or even an old telephone. The majority of the cases treated in this paper are not due to technical difficulties but rather a breakdown in the recognition sequence where one party, for some reason, does not recognize the other. This triggers either a repair sequence which requires the unrecognized other to provide a second voice sample and, at times, a self-identification or simply a self-identification. At this point, the unrecognized becomes recognized which results in the recognizer in producing the *ah* token. In this environment *ah* appears to play a dual role: a change-of-state signifying on behalf of the recognizer that the unrecognized has now been identified and subsequently recognized and that the unrecognized should have been recognized sooner.

Similar to other environments, *ah* appears to be always turn-initial and occurs before some other portion, such as a repeated portion from the previous turn which is usually the name of the unrecognized. The repetition of the name of the unrecognized appears to be the primary resource for which the recognizer employs to reiterate to the recognized that she or he should have been recognized at some previous point in the opening. While the majority of previous conversation has concerned the role of the recognizer, there is also something to be said on the part of the recognized.

It was mentioned above that telephone conversations initially have a structural organization which privileges the caller over the answerer due to who talks first: the answerer. In terms of identification-recognition sequence, the caller's voice is initially substituted for the sound of the ringing telephone to which the call recipient answers and thereby provides the caller with an initial voice sample. Although this is only a short turn usually consisting in something like "hello" or "bueno" this is usually enough to give the caller an upper hand. When the identification-recognition sequence temporarily lapses, the situation appears to switch in favor of the participant who does not recognize the other party, which is usually the call recipient. In these cases it can be seen that by establishing the caller as unknown the call recipient treats the caller as if she or he were unknown and thereby forces the caller into performing as if she or he were an unfamiliar person. That is to say, even though the unrecognized knows she or he should be recognized, the call recipient does not allow the caller to proceed as a recognized until the call recipient comes to the conclusion that the caller is, after all, a familiar. The effect, then, is one of limiting the caller's participation until the call recipient has the opportunity to consult her or his own internal resources as to the identity of the caller which, in turn, gives the caller

access to information that is available to familiar callers but unavailable to unfamiliar ones. The role of *ah* in this sequence is a rather transparent one not unlike some of the other functions already mentioned above. As a particle of recognition, the turn-initial *ah* is the particle with which the recognizer utters at the point in the opening in which the recognizer recognizes the unfamiliar participant. Not unlike other functions of *ah*, the change-of-state within this environment is one which the before-after particle is the externalized sign of the internal phenomenon that indicates the process and product of recognition within the recognizer. One of the less obvious results of *ah* in the late recognition sequences is that, along with the production of the token, the utterer often repeats the recognized's name not only to reify that a recognition has, indeed, taken place but that the recognizer should have recognized the unfamiliar sooner. The repetition of the name of the possible unfamiliar-turned-familiar, then, also serves the purpose of letting the recognized know that, despite the difficulty in recognition, the situation is now concluded.

Conclusion of Spanish Data

This chapter has considered the role which the Spanish particle *ah* plays in the sequential organization of naturally-occurring conversation. Similar to the English token, *ah* has been analyzed as a change-of-state token whose primary function is to receipt elements of an informing relevant to a recipient's state of existing knowledge or information or a lack thereof. While, in general, *ah* does, as its primary function, accepts prior talk as informative the Spanish particle another its primary aspect appears that of communicating how the recipient is orienting to some aspect of speaker's talk. The manner in which the recipient demonstrates orientability, however, is what is distinct from those manners of

organization demonstrated in the English data review. The free-standing *ah* occurring in an informing environment is the function which most closely invokes the English data. Even in this environment, however, *ah* begins to take on its own character as something distinctly non-English, such as the variable placement of the particle either before or after an assessment in turns in which the token is not free-standing. In this aspect, the *ah* token appears to imitate other syntax-variable elements in language such as Spanish which are classified as "pro-drop"[8]. Another interesting feature concerning the use of *ah* in the informing environment deals with the apparently "emotional component" indicating moments of surprise or unexpected news. It is interesting that this token appears to combine elements of Goffman's response cry as a verbal, non-lexical, and conventionalized element of discourse with a concrete interactional achievement. Like other response cries, *ah* is meant to communicate that which is inside the utterer's mind to some external source, whether that be a group of intimates involved in talk, a group of strangers strolling through the park, or even as a bit of self-talk which is a performance only for the benefit of the utterer itself. Response cries, after all, are not meant, necessarily, to influence talk but rather simply to provide a comment on some relevant aspect of context. This particle in Spanish, *ah*, appears to be a rather strong form of a response cry that has direct effects on subsequent organization of talk.

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8 In linguistics pro-drop indicates a feature of language in which the subject pronoun is not overtly realized in an non-emphatic sentence. In other words, the subject pronoun in normal, non-emphatic interaction would be "dropped" as unnecessary due to verb or case-marked features. Furthermore, pro-drop languages tend to allow for more syntactic flexibility, such as placing the pronoun after the verb instead of before it to convey both stylistic and semantic nuance.

The confirmation and speakership incipiency environments are each composed of a similar form, *ah* (+*sí/bueno*) + action, but have rather different functions. The former results on the part of a recipient who wants to use her or his turn to confirm a topic introduced in a previous turn or to elicit further talk about a nominated topic; the latter, on the other hand, uses the recipient role with the production of *ah* as a manner of making a speakership bid and thereby introducing a new piece of information in to the discourse (ideally, that is) by responding to the speaker. In both cases, the particle *ah* (+*sí/bueno*) + action form is employed but put to different use. The confirmation function of *ah* downplays the role of recipient as one of an elicitor of talk while the speakership incipiency function, as its name suggests, uses the particle as a manner of distancing the recipient as recipient in order to move into a more active state of speakership and thereby effecting change in the current speakership roles.

Finally, in the context of telephone openings, *ah* provides a way to signal to an unrecognized party that the recognition is now complete and known conversationalists can now go on with their business as familiars. *Ah* provides a strong basis for limiting access to the perceived unknown until that unknown proves that she or he is, indeed, a recognizable party. Although *ah* does not provide the means for limiting information–the structure of the opening provides this mechanism–it does function as a trigger not only for the recipient who is doing the recognizing but also the speaker who now recognizes that she or he is recognized as a familiar through the deployment of the token. In each of these cases, the issue of recipient or *ah* utterer orientation to the other party is one in which the context of the utterance in which the particle is uttered provides the means for the change-of-state to occur. The interaction between participants, context, and talk is the stage upon which the exchange of information is primary.

Chapter Four: Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to analyze the Spanish particle *ah* according to the rubric of a change-of-state, an idea which came from English language data. Not only has the intent, then, of this study to compare and contrast the uses and sequential organization of *ah vis-a-vis oh* but to determine the usefulness of using conversational insights gleaned from one language on another language. The English language data was used as a foundation upon which the Spanish data could then be analyzed and compared. The result has been that, in general, *ah* has many similarities to *oh*. On a fundamental level both particles have been shown to be change-of-state particles which indicate some internal change on the part of the utterer relative to some aspect of information or knowledge. In this sense both particles function as response cries that provide a commentary on the internal state of knowledge of the utterer while supplying the interlocutor with external cues as to how the utterer has personalized and internalized some aspect of information in a previous portion of talk. As change-of-state particles, both *ah* and *oh* conform to a similar "fuzzy" semantic map in which the meaning of the particle depends not only upon which environment it occurs but also the local, interactional features of the talk to which it responds. Put differently, both *oh* and *ah* do not have any particular meaning but rather a range of meanings that are invoked through interaction; the actual utterance of "oh" or "ah" functions as an conversational device in order to get some particular interactional work performed by helping to structure and channel interaction within specific environments. This work performed by the particles operates at an utterance-by-utterance level such that each particle takes on a realm of meaning according to the precise placement at a particular point in interaction. In so doing, the particles provide local structure to a given sequence of talk according to

contextual and interactional cues. These cues can trigger free-standing, turn-initial, or, in the case of Spanish, turn-final particles where the further turn-component can function either to mitigate of amplify the interactional consequences of the particle itself. In fact, many times the +action portion of a turn–or its lack of a further action sequence–will provide the most information concerning the implications of the particle in a given spate of talk. As this study has concluded, both English and Spanish tokens act as responses to some previous element in previous talk by producing the token as a receipt soon after the relevant portion of talk has been recognized. These receipts have been shown to be systematic in organization; they tend to occur at points where chunks of information exist and at points where information is completed or perceived to be so. In other words, the response particles in both English and Spanish help participants in talk find the edges of discourse such that other actions, if appropriate, can be initiated, such as speakership bids, new topic nominations, or continuation of some previously nominated topic. The interactional consequences of a particle depends not only on the particular environment within which it occurs but also the local contour of that environment relative to each participant's orientation to it. Through the use of these particles, both speaker and recipient interactively orient themselves in a slightly different way to turn which occur before and after the utterance of the response token. It is important to note that, despite similarities in general features of organization between the two particles, specific interactional consequences differ between the two languages. For example, within the response to an informing environment, the free-standing English *oh* has a topic-curtailing effect on the talk. In contrast, the free-standing *ah* in Spanish does has the opposite effect on talk: it actually encourages further talk along the topic already in progress. While this may appear to indicate a

fundamental difference in the organization of these particles between different language groups, it is interesting that, despite the differences, similar issues arise between the two languages–the issue of whether a particle tends to continue or discontinue talk within that environment. Put another way, despite the difference in local organization within specific environments, such as the free-standing *oh/ah* in an informing, a similar organization results in that similar issues are addressed even though English and Spanish have different ways of dealing with the interactional consequences of the two particles. However, while a fundamental organization may permeate similar structures in similar environments such as the one mentioned above, this does not imply that a fundamental similarity exists outside of a general framework for analyzing particles such as *ah* according to insights into the notion of a "change-of-state particle" gained from English data. Moreover, the Spanish data also demonstrates that although *ah* functions according to similar notions that *oh* does, there are significant deviations from one language to another, namely functions which further define particular environments according to language group. While both Spanish and English appears to have a general category for responses to an informing using *oh*/*ah*, Spanish seems to make a further distinction between an informing and confirming environment in which the function of *ah* seems to be organized differently. Whereas in the informing, *ah* can occur in as a free-standing, turn-initial, or turn-final position in the context of the confirming environment *ah* appears only as a turn-initial particle within the sequence: *ah* + *sí/bueno* (+action). This implies two things. First, general similarities between *oh* and *ah* in English and Spanish apply only on a general level. This means that certain environments may have similar organizations across language groups but, overall, each language has its own manner of dealing with how it will organize interaction according the

presence of the particle in a given spate of talk. Second, because some areas appear to have a similar organization in one environment does not mean that each language will necessarily have similarities in other aspects of that environment nor in other environments. *Oh* appears to only be a turn-initial particle and almost never appears in any other position; *ah*, on the other hand, can appear in other positions relative to the context of the utterance in interaction. Also, *oh* does not seem to imply to English speakers that a potential speakership bid may or may not occur by the utterer of the particle within this turn or, if there is a speakership bid, it is only a short turn which either helps to support the speaker in her of his continuation of a topic or helps confirm a topic for discussion. The Spanish particle, on the other hand, appears to indicate that the utterer may or may not venture a speakership bid such that speakers, when they hear *ah*, almost expect something more from the utterer of the particle. In this respect, the English particle does not appear to help in the management of discourse from the point of view of the speaker incipient who, through the production of *ah* may want to contribute something of interest to the talk at hand. These differences in organization, then, point to other issues that are yet to be explored not only in cross-cultural studies of talk but also in monolingual interactional studies as well.

Much study remains in the fields of monolingual non-English conversation as well as cross-cultural elements of talk. The present study has focused primarily on the Spanish use of *ah* in conversation. While English has become a rather well documented language from a conversation analytic perspective, most non-English Indo-European languages have yet to be explored beyond only the most superficial level. While *ah* has been shown to be a rich source of data, there are many other particles in Spanish which do not appear to have as readily an English equivalent: *bueno*, *pues*, *ay*, and *este* are all interesting candidates. Another interesting aspect

of these particles would be a study on the placement of *ah* in telephone openings and closings. While the former was treated in a small section here, the latter proved relevant to the current project but was omitted due to a lack of a substantial enough data to adequately represent the issues which *ah* raised. It appears, however, that *ah* is a pre-closing marker by which the recipient signals to the speaker that the closing relevant adjacency pair will begin at a particular point–particularly using the form *ah* + *okey* as the first pair part. Many fruitful further studies remain concerning the particle *ah*. However, the work done in Spanish has revealed that even English conversation has not been completely exhausted as there exists very little data as to the influence of *oh* on speakership incipiency. Just as each new conversation that is transcribed and analyzed gives new insight into the sequential implicativeness of conversational phenomena in general, cross-linguistic comparative studies should be able to give new insight in the inner workings of already researched findings and thereby re-evaluate old findings in a new light.

Although the present study can suggest avenues of investigation into monolingual elements of talk the most interesting future research in this area deals with cross-cultural issues. One of the areas which seem particularly fruitful for future investigation deals with the differences between *oh* and *ah* in terms of how each language deals with interlocutors perceptions of the discourse itself. As was commented in chapter three, the speakership incipient environment indicated that speaker's orientation to recipient acknowledgment resulted from the speaker's own perception of the discourse itself and how the speaker perceived what the recipient may be indicating with the acknowledgment produced. One consequence listed was that if the speaker perceived the recipient not to be making a speakership bid but rather simply an acknowledgment of the speaker's previous

turn, the speaker could interrupt the recipient's talk during or just after the acknowledgment portion of the turn. This was the case even when it appeared as if the recipient was, in fact, attempting to make a speakership bid. The speaker's response, then, is both a reaction to the discourse itself through the acknowledgment structure (*ah* + *sí/bueno*, *ah*, etc.) but also the speaker's perception of that structure that warrants an interruption in a turn of this nature. While this phenomenon has been documented in Spanish using *ah*, it would be of interest for future studies to investigate this phenomenon more throughly in other aspects of naturally-occurring Spanish conversation as well as in English. In the final analysis, acknowledgment tokens like the ones which have been researched throughout this paper have the goal of understanding the inherent order which each competent speaker of any language must possess in order to produce and recognize conventional speech as native speakers. The method employed here helps to describe and, hopefully, elucidate the action produced by speaker and recipient who interactively produce mutually recognizable structures to get the work of conversation done.

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